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Torres on sex abuse reports: Take allegations seriously. PAGE 3

75¢

3 more people test positive

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Three days after the CNMI logged its 50th positive case of the virus that causes COVID-19, three more passengers who were tested upon arriving yesterday morning, Aug. 17, were also found positive for the coronavirus, lifting the CNMI's total to 53.

The three individuals were identified through traveler screening and are currently in the designated isolation area where the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. can monitor the three individuals.

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The Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan. BEA CABRERA

'Hotels losing up to $10M a month'

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI is on its eighth month under the state of emergency due to COVID-19 and local hotels are hemorrhaging at an estimated combined amount of $10 million a month. The situation is so dire that member-hotels of the Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands are being forced to make hard choices these days to stay afloat. That includes the termination of many employees, including many of their foreign workers, called CW-1 workers.

HANMI chair Gloria Cavanagh said the association, which represents 12 hotels in the CNMI, is losing "millions and millions of dollars every month in this industry amongst the 12 of us. I don't

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AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Aug. 17, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	516	42	558
Recovered	345	7	352
Active	159	42	201
Deaths	6*	0	6*
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			28,918

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	50	3	53
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			12,681**

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Torres: CNMI should not be on high-risk list

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres maintains that the CNMI should be taken out of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's health advisory that designates the islands as a "high-risk" area for COVID-19, along with other Pacific Islands.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muna, according to the governor, has been in communication with the CDC to address the concern.

"Meeting a number of pop-

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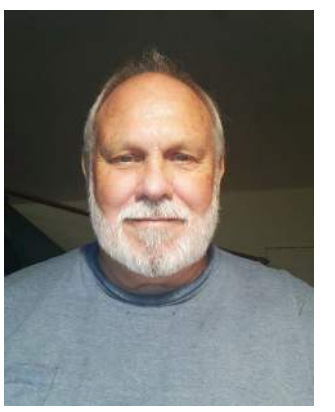
COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

Gary Liddle, 72



By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Retired artist and businessman Gary Liddle, 72, was found dead last week after neighbors reported the stench coming from his room in his home in San Jose.

According to Liddle's neighbors at the former San Jose Motel, located behind San Jose Mart and Dolphin Store, Liddle's body was found in his room last Wednesday but they believe he could have been dead at least 24 hours before his body was found because

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Elizabeth Debicki will play the Princess of Wales in seasons five and six of "The Crown."

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Local

Banzai Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, tourist sites to be revamped

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Banzai Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, and some other major tourist spots are going to get a much needed facelift, with the Torres administration working with the Marianas Visitors Authority to revamp the sites while tourism remains suspended due to the pandemic.

Speaking at a media briefing Thursday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said that he also met with the members of his Cabinet and rallied them to support all efforts to make the CNMI a world-class tourism destination.

"I will be making some renovation on some of the tourist sites," the governor said.

Aside from Banzai Cliff and the Bird Island Lookout, the governor mentioned Suicide Cliff, the Last Command Post, dive spots such as Obyan and Lau Lau, as well as beach areas and walkways, as among those that will get renovated.

Earlier, when asked about why Banzai and Grotto have remained closed to the public despite Managaha being open now, Torres explained that it is because these areas will be renovated.

"We're looking at the safety of the facility. We met with MVA, and some of the government entities…to renovate these areas. …Right now, the facilities are not up and running, and some, if not a lot, of these tourist sites need some renovations. For safety reasons, they're not open at this point," he said.

The Bird Island Lookout will be renovated as part of efforts to make the CNMI a world-class tourism destination. IVA MAURIN

Renovations will range from minimal improvements such as repainting, to enhancements such as adding concrete tables, the governor added. "Every site has a different renovation or remodeling [need]. But overall, [we are] working now with different agencies to revamp our tourist sites, so that when our tourists come back, all of the sites would be in better shape than where they are at today."

The governor is also appealing to the community to "pick up after themselves" when they visit beaches and parks. "Leave [the beaches and parks] cleaner than when you found it. Again, this is our island. We cannot expect anybody else to clean it for us. The first thing we want our tourists to see is a clean environment. Let's please, maintain and embrace our environment."

US Census of Guam suspends in-person interviews

TAMUNING, Guam—The 2020 Census of Guam is suspending all in-person interviews. Residents who have yet to complete their 2020 Census interview still have the opportunity to participate in this once-in-a-decade population count by calling 645-2020.

Residents may also contact their specific village assistance lines:

- Northern Dededo: 645-2119
- Southern Dededo: 645-2125
- NorthernYigo: 645-2115
- Southern Yigo: 645-2112
- Tamuning, Tumon, Harmon, Hagatna: 645-2106
- Agana Heights, Chalan Pago-Ordot, Sinajana: 645-2090
- Mongmong, Toto, Maite, Mangilao: 645-2085
- Barrigada: 645-2097
- Piti, asan, Agat, Santa Rita: 645-2101
- Yona, Talofofo, Inarajan, Merizo, Umatac: 645-2080

Call center hours have been extended to ensure everyone is counted. The new hours are as follows:

- Monday through Saturday, 7am – 10pm
- Sunday, 8am – 6pm

All 2020 Census of Guam employees will continue to wear masks, maintain social distance guidelines, and adhere to all other mandatory public health requirements. During this time, the Guam Census Office will be closed to the public.

For residents who have already completed their interview, they may receive another call regarding the answers they provided during their 2020 Census of Guam quality check to ensure the accuracy of the responses given.

All data collection for the 2020 Census of Guam is slated to end Sept. 15, 2020. ***(PR)***

DPS: Crime rate has gone down since pandemic started

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety has seen a significant drop in the CNMI's crime rate following the strict curfew hours set by the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force.

According to DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero, crime has gone down and he believes the strict curfew hours is the reason for this, as well as compliance of members of the community.

"We do come across people who don't abide by curfew and our officers do stop them and advise them and they comply. We have never had to make an arrest for it. Aside from the arrest at the airport [when one incoming passenger refused to be put in quarantine], we've never had to make an arrest relating to COVID-19. People are cooperating, and the task force is doing a good job in putting the necessary procedures in place," he said.

DPS spokesperson Dre Pangelinan said that traffic cases, like crime, have also gone down tremendously because of the curfew.

However, DPS is still working on the exact figures on how many crime incidents occurred since the government shut down and implemented strict curfew laws back in March. "During that time, when no one was on the roadways, majority of the people that were out on the streets were first responders and it helped first responders get to where they needed to be and without having the risk of coming into contact with any other vehicle," Pangelinan said.

He said the curfew helped the department a lot and that DPS has also stopped issuing updates on how many dispatch calls they receive over the week because calls that come in are now nearly almost all COVID-19-related.

"The numbers have really gone down so I didn't really need to send out updates on that. Most of the inquiries coming in were about COVID-19 and COVID-19-related issues so we have had to direct these issues to the task force," he said.

Pangelinan said that during the first week of the implementation of the curfew, DPS officers immediately enforced the curfew laws, both on the roadways and through social media.

"We had officers out on the roadways making sure that residents are aware of the curfew. We have also posted it and we have sent out a press release that specifically states details of the curfew," he said.

However, Pangelinan said the department also gives credit to members of the community for making DPS' job of enforcing the curfew laws easier. "Toward the beginning, everybody was aware because during that time, everybody was in quarantine and everybody was on their mobile devices and they were quick to disseminate the information to their friends and families and that really helped us out a lot," he said.

Man arrested for criminal mischief at Tasi Homes

On Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2020, at about 4:04pm, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a 911 call reporting a criminal mischief complaint in Susupe. Police were dispatched to the scene.

Upon arrival at around 4:18pm, police met with the caller at the scene. The caller led police to a vehicle that had its front windshield damaged by an unknown object. Police were shown the surveillance footage from the night prior, which showed a male individual throwing an object toward the vehicle. Upon reviewing the footage, police immediately recognized the suspect as Lucas Manglona from prior incidents. At about 4:40pm, police located the suspect near the area and arrested him at about 4:44pm. He was brought to Kanoa Resort for clearance before being transported to the Department of Corrections to be booked and processed.

On Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio issued a rule 5 warrant for Manglona with a bail set at $3,000, where he awaits arraignment. ***(PR)***

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NMC's classes migrate online

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College has decided that all classes that have a face-to-face component and hybrid classes—which means a combination of online and face-to-face classes—began virtually or online for the first two weeks of the fall semester.

This means that all face-to-face and hybrid classes will be meeting via NMC's online system, known as Moodle, or Zoom, from Aug. 17 to Aug. 29. Additionally, all face-to-face and hybrid classes will be held on campus.

The email also stated that NMC's students should expect more details for face-to-face courses from instructors and is recommended to check their email twice a day.

Furthermore, the $1.8 million that the college received last April 11 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act will help the college buy fundamental technology and upgrade its facilities, NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico said.

Out of the $1.8 million, the college released $920,000 to its students, leaving the rest of the funds to be used for the facilities upgrades and required supplies, which includes:

- 29% of it will go to technology (hardware and software resources) /
- Instructional materials
- 15% will go to new personal computing equipment
- 13% will go to facilities upgrades
- 13% will go to necessary personal protective equipment and cleaning and sanitation supplies
- 10% will go to new classroom equipment
- 5% will go to training for employees

"Although we have identified a plan for the CARES funds already, the plan will continue to change as we learn more about the COVID-19 pandemic and how we can help employees and students," Eliptico said.

He said the new technology that the college will obtain will be used in a remote access server for employees to access NMC's network from their homes, create Zoom professional accounts for faculty, a video teleconferencing equipment, and an online payment system.

"The college must remain flexible and adapt to changing circumstances during the pandemic," Eliptico said.

The college will also help its students with any technology needs that they may have throughout a series of programs and vouchers. Also, with no income coming in for students due to loss of jobs, the college is working on a laptop loan program for students who have limited access to computer equipment.

The remaining CARES Act fund will be distributed to assist students with their internet payments. The college released $920,000 to students whose lives were impacted by the coronavirus outbreak.

Torres on sex abuse reports: Take allegations seriously

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres wants the Public School System as well as all private schools in the CNMI to have a protocol in place on measures that need to be taken in case of allegations of sexual abuse concerning students.

This comes soon after Torres asked the Office of the Attorney General to look into how PSS handles and manages allegations of sexual abuse of its students. In the letter, the governor stressed that those who have been victims of sexual assault by teachers or individuals of authority within the PSS deserve justice.

At the media briefing last Thursday, Torres stated that the administration has "always been hearing complaints" of sex abuse of students and that they "saw a case again a few months ago." Stating that adults should be the "first responders" to children, the governor stated that he wants to make sure that there are protocols in place, and that actions are being taken to address these complaints. "…It's important that we take this matter seriously because how do we protect our children, if we don't take what is being said around seriously?" he said.

In early August, the governor outlined having "greater safety for students" one of his four legislative priorities, where he asked the Legislature to review and strengthen provisions of the laws dealing with the use of school authority to sexually abuse minors, to address allegations of sexual abuse of students.

According to Torres, the concerns have not been addressed satisfactorily, and so he is demanding stricter penalties for the sexual abuse of minors, and for strengthening the elimination of the statute of limitations on sexual abuse of minors.

"Everything that we're doing always starts back with our children as our future. They are our future, they are our future leaders. We're doing this for them, protect their environment because it's for our children, the next generation. How do we provide that if we can't take the allegations seriously?" he pointed out.

PSS working on recruiting NMC nursing students before the start of school year

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Public School System wants to recruit and hire nursing student from the Northern Marianas College to perform nursing duties on each campus for the upcoming school year.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said PSS is still in the planning phases to recruit nursing students from NMC.

"We will ask NMC if it is possible for their nursing students to come and do their practicum on a school campus guided by a registered nurse," he said.

Ada said PSS has been trying to hire nurses, but they have been having a hard time recruiting them. PSS needs the nurses to, among other duties, administer temperature checks on students and staff daily to ensure everyone's health on campus.

Through the federal Education Stabilization Fund, PSS has been allocated $550,000 to hire 22 part-time nurses for 10 months.

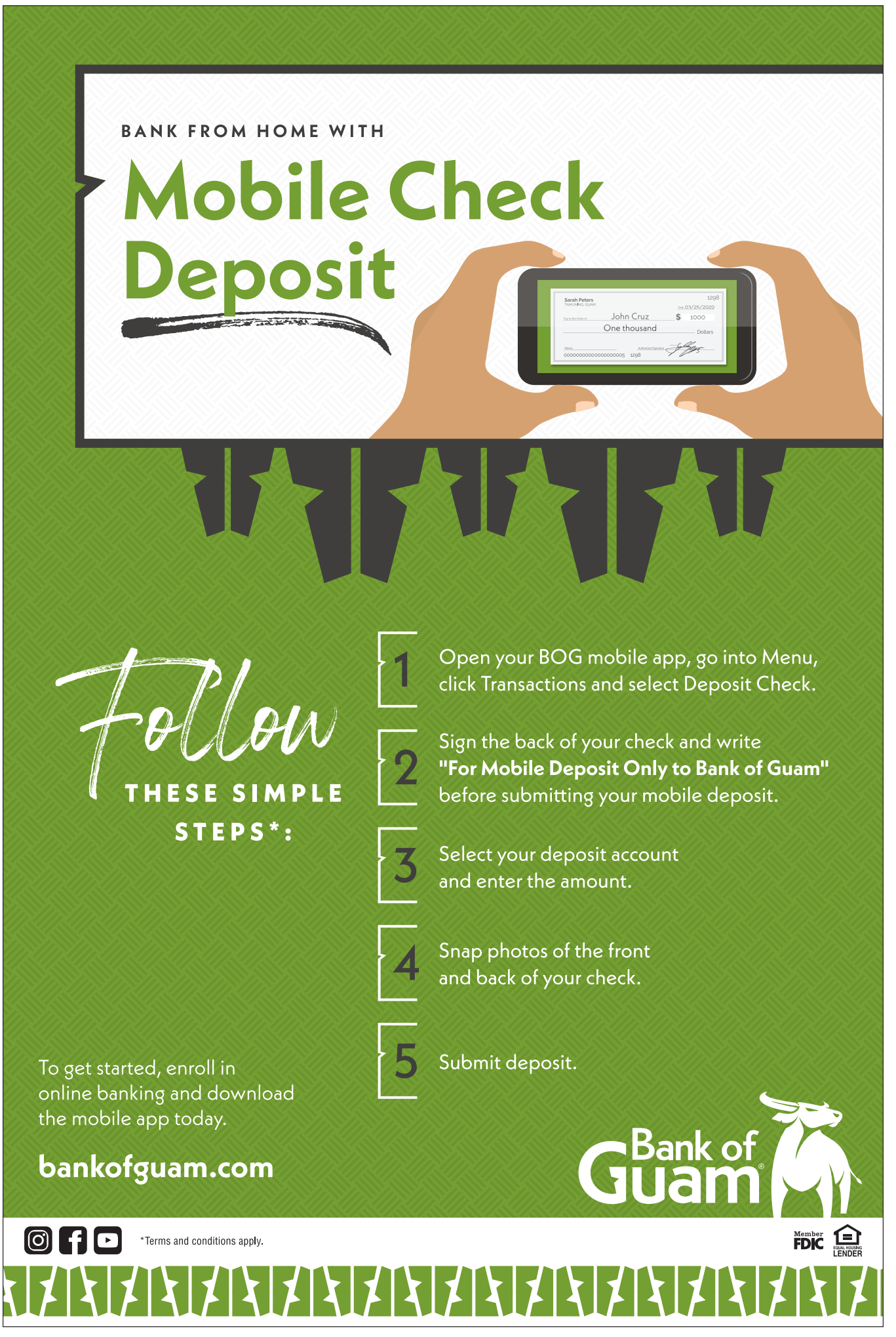
Ada said PSS has enough personal protective equipment or PPE supply and 300 wand thermometers, but will procure more so all classrooms will have one.

Before schools reopen on Sept. 8, he said PSS will hire a janitorial service to do deep cleaning of classrooms, offices and bathrooms.

During the recently concluded summer program conducted at Kagman Elementary School, Ada said that parents provided washable, reusable masks to their children.

"Our families and community members are working together in addressing this pandemic," he said. Our priority now is to reopen schools with caution," he said.

Ada said he will also ask the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force to test teachers, again if need be, before the start of the new school year.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IPI will defend exclusive rights to all gaming on Saipan

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC said yesterday that it will vigorously defend its exclusive rights to all gaming on Saipan.

IPI said it believes that all gaming activity, such as video poker machines and e-gaming, should be under IPI's exclusive gaming license and be subject to the oversight of the Commonwealth Casino Commission.

IPI issued the statements to clarify its position on gaming exclusivity.

Saipan Tribune published an article yesterday quoting IPI general counsel Michael W. Dotts as saying that IPI's inability to pay the $15.5 million in annual license fee could be an opportunity for the Legislature to revisit the statute and to open up casino licenses to more applicants.

Dotts said one possibility is that IPI will lose its exclusivity in operating a casino on Saipan but not its license.

IPI said yesterday that the headline of the story can be read to suggest that IPI might be willing to give up its exclusivity to all gaming activity on Saipan.

"That is not the case," IPI said in a statement.

IPI said the implementation of the casino agreement is now on its sixth year, and that IPI sincerely appeals to the CNMI government to consolidate all gaming activity under one regulatory framework as promised.

IPI said it has approached the Lottery Commission and CCC to try to ensure a healthy and sustainable gaming industry on Saipan with true exclusivity as its foundation.

HOTELS

From Page 1

really know everyone's numbers but I would guess we are losing from $3 million to $10 million a month.

"This is also a tremendous loss to the CNMI economy as the government is not collecting CNMI business taxes like [business gross revenue tax] and there is no hotel occupancy tax," she added.

Another hard decision that HANMI hotels have had to do—"something we don't like doing and we didn't think we would be doing"—is the early terminations of many CW-1 workers. She said many member-hotels have already notified their staff that they are being let go as this is the only way they could sustain and maintain operations.

"How many have currently applied for unemployment? Both U.S. citizens and then you have 12,000 CWs? That is a lot," she added.

CW-1 workers are being displaced by early terminations or expiration of their CW permit under Public Law 115-218, which requires them to exit the CNMI for 30 consecutive days at the expiration of the second renewal. A CW permit holder would not be eligible for a renewal until after the employee exits the CNMI. Only then can an employer submit a renewal petition for that worker. This is called the " touchback provision"—which requires foreign workers to touch back to their home countries.

Cavanagh, who is also the general manager of Pacific Island Club Saipan, said that management has been doing a few early CW terminations. "I do not foresee and I don't think anyone has the crystal ball to find out when we are actually going to be open again. Hotels cannot reopen until we have regular flights.

The foreign workers that PIC is renewing work in its engineering department, which is a skills position. She said they would like to keep some culinary personnel "but a lot of them are being capped so they have to do touchback."

To date, four out 12 HANMI members are in operation: Hyatt Regency Saipan, Surf Rider in Chalan Kanoa, Kensington Hotel, and Aqua Resort Club.

HANMI member Hyatt Regency Saipan never ceased operations. For a time, they were the only hotel in the CNMI receiving Federal Emergency Management Agency officers, health care workers, and federal contract workers. In April, they furloughed some employees and laid off others as a means to ensure financial stability.

Last week, CW workers at the Hyatt were informed of the inevitable. "We are giving them over a month's notice of non-renewal. …We didn't terminate anyone effective immediately. We met with our CWs on Friday and they were all informed that due to the business outlook, the impact of COVID-19, and the uncertainties of having our lease renewed, we won't be renewing contracts this coming Sept. 30, 2020," said Hyatt Human Resources director Josephine Mesta

"We advised employees that United Airlines flights to the Philippines are scheduled for Sept. 14 and Sept. 21, and we would like to get them on those flights, so they do not overstay and jeopardize any future employment opportunities," Mesta said.

Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan has laid off almost 100 CW workers and some culinary staff at Kensington Hotel in San Roque need to touch back to their home countries by next month.

To jumpstart the tourism industry, Canavanagh said that there have been talks about having temporary flights to come to Saipan last week. "But two flights [are] twice a week with 170 seats and we have 12 hotels; it just doesn't work. So, even if it was for those special flights in, [PIC] wouldn't open. E-Land has three properties or hotels and it makes no sense fighting amongst everyone for such a small market.

"We are not getting back the Chinese tourists soon because there is a national ban, Japan flights are suspended until October already so we don't know what is happening there. The first country that has the possibility of opening is Korea, but then that's just two flights in one week, not a big plane. [It] doesn't make any sense for all the three of us to open," Cavanagh added.

She pointed out that zero tourists for many months now has pushed the majority of hotels in the CNMI to stop operating, which also affects everything like schools and how much money they get, power, water, Medicare—"just every single thing" because everything comes from the tourism economy.

"The hotels are shut down, so the CNMI economy is shut down. We all have to work together because the tourism economy is everyone's business.

"If you want proof, look at the situation that we are in today. We don't know when we are going to get out of this pandemic and, once we get out, I hope the community understands how important it is that we have investors that are willing to go through times like this and still look at the possibility of opening in order to make the economy start running," Cavanagh added.

TORRES

From Page 1

ulation puts us in the same category with others. We're making the argument [that] even if you break it down for percentages for testing in the community, we have the highest percent in testing throughout the nation than anyone," Torres said.

As a high-risk area, CDC recommended that people avoid all non-essential travel to the islands, and for older adults and anyone with certain underlying medical condition to consider postponing all travel, including essential travel, to the CNMI. The CDC advisory states that resources may be limited should they get sick on the islands.

However, the governor argues that there is another list that designates the CNMI as a low-risk destination.

"We've got to stick to one, and we're arguing that as well. We've been going to different tourist destinations to look at our numbers. Our number is at [49] today, and yet, we're being considered high-risk. What is then the number to consider as low risk?" he said.

"If you look at the numbers across the world, other than Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and American Samoa where they literally stopped any international flight, we're very safe," he added.

Prior to the CDC's high-risk advisory, for the past months, the CNMI has been coordinating with other "low-risk" countries on a "bubble model" for travel. This is where governments from each of the low-risk countries, states, or territories form an agreement that sets up how each of its respective citizens are going to be handled, and how they will be provided entry to each other's country, without the impact of quarantine.

In an earlier interview, Alex Sablan, of the Governor's Economic Task Force, explained that because no country, territory, nor state want their citizens to be overly impacted by costs or processes that would further delay them in their ability to travel, protocols and mitigation measures are being discussed regarding bubble tourism.

3 MORE

From Page 1

Contact tracing has been conducted for the most immediate contacts of the latest cases such as passengers on the same flight, close family members, friends, and associates.

In reference to the CNMI's 50th case, CHCC held a press conference yesterday, during which Esther Muña, CHCC chief executive officer, said that 10 personnel—three health care providers, five registered nurses, and two Northern Marianas College nursing assistant trainees—were in close contact with the 50th case.

"[The 10] close contacts of case 50 have been quarantined and are being monitored. To ensure the peace of mind of the employees, their families and our patients, [we] instructed these personnel to self-quarantine. In the event that they aren't able to separate themselves from their families, they are able to quarantine at the designated government quarantine facility," said Muña.

She assured that CHCC is confident in their infection control practices, and has deemed the 50th case as low risk. The spread of the virus from the 50th case is also deemed low risk, she added.

Addressing speculations about the 50th case, which was reportedly identified through a mandatory pre-operation screening for a scheduled surgery operation at the hospital, Dr. Beth Kohnen, CHCC's deputy chief medical officer, said it was actually a case of "delayed diagnosis."

Muña explained this means that an individual who's prescreened for COVID-19 before surgery may come back as negative, but is later found positive after the surgery. She said that the COVID-19 is usually done 48 to 72 hours before the surgical procedure is actually performed,

"So an individual who's on the table may not be COVID-19-free, even though they were tested and gone through prescreening," said Muña.

Muña said that, once they were informed that the 50th case was positive, they immediately did contact tracing.

Subroto Banerji, CHCC chief operations officer, says that it's hard to tell which specific area the possible transmission occurred, but that is the reason why the contact tracing team at CHCC continues to "follow up on leads."

"We have identified at least 10 individuals who were as part of the surgery event and then beyond that. There's been at least five additional family members who've been identified as close contacts. We are back tracing these individuals' connection to previously identified cases, looking backwards to cases identified in early in June and July," said Banerji.

Banerji added that looking back as far as June and July allows them to check if there is some family connections. However, investigation is still ongoing, and they will continue to "dig and investigate all the possible sources of possible transmission."

The Commonwealth Health Center has been able to resume elective surgery procedures because they have adequate supply of personal protective equipment.

GARY

From Page 1

the stench could be smelled from outside his room.

Neighbors also claim that Liddle did not die of COVID-19, in reaction to a video circulating on social media of individuals in safety gear entering the residence. "We just want to clarify for the public that Mr. Liddle did not die of COVID-19. If he did, we would all be in quarantine right now. Those people in suits were hired by our landlord to clean out Mr. Liddle's room because of the smell," said a neighbor, who requested anonymity.

When asked about the matter, John Selleck, one of Liddle's neighbors, said he wasn't there when Liddle's body was found, but he volunteered to help clean Liddle's room. When asked to describe the scene, Selleck said Liddle had a lot of junk and paperwork in his room and he seemed to have a hoarding problem. However, something that stood out for him was that the room had many bodily fluids on the floor, including a lot of blood, where Liddle's body was found.

"I can't tell you if there was foul play involved. I can tell you that police said they are still doing an investigation," he said.

Other neighbors also shared that prior to Liddle's death, they noticed two individuals on separate occasions taking photos of Liddle outside the residence.

Selleck said police continue to investigate Liddle's cause of death but have yet to inform them of what really happened.

The Department of Public Safety refused to comment on its investigation.

Selleck said he took it upon himself to contact Liddle's family in the United States about what had happened since he has no family members here.

Selleck noted that Liddle always spoke about his passion to help the people of the CNMI, spending his years of retirement trying to bring in business opportunities for the CNMI, including Rota.

According to an article on the Marianas Visitors Authority webpage, for over two years, Liddle has been spearheading a Business Development Workshop for local artists, combining both his knowledge of business and his love for local art.

Liddle has lived on Saipan for over 10 years but began his business career 64 years ago in California at the age of 6, both in starting his first business and in working in his family's business.

Kilili bill will expand award for NMI's STEM teachers

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) introduced the STEM Educator Awards Equity Act on Friday to expand the annual Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching to include the Marianas and other insular areas individually.

Award finalists from the Northern Marianas, Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands are currently chosen as a group, unlike the 50 states, Puerto Rico and Department of Defense schools. If enacted, Sablan's bill would mean one teacher from each insular area could be recognized each year.

"The purpose of the award program is to inspire excellence and provide a role model for other local STEM educators to emulate," Sablan said. "But if no Marianas teacher is recognized that purpose is not fulfilled. My bill fixes that problem for our teachers and for STEM teachers in all the insular areas."

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, established in 1983, are the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government specifically for K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teaching. Recipients receive a $10,000 award from the National Science Foundation and participate in expert-led training and collaboration opportunities during their visit to Washington, D.C.

Awards are given to teachers from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Department of Defense Education Activity schools, and the U.S. territories as a group. By disaggregating the grouping for U.S. territories, Sablan's bill would enable teachers from the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands to be represented each year, without competing with teachers from other insular areas.

Eleven teachers from the Northern Marianas have received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching since the program's creation. The most recent awardee is 2018 recipient Joseph John Muña, who received the award while teaching at William S. Reyes Elementary School on Saipan. ***(PR)***

NMC sees over 1,000 registrants

The Northern Marianas College saw over 1,000 registrants for the fall semester that started yesterday, Aug. 17.

According to NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico, more than 1,200 students have already registered for the fall 2020 semester and the number is likely to increase over the next few days since registration is still ongoing.

Despite online news reports stating college enrollment across the U.S. may see a 20% decline in enrollment in the fall due to the pandemic, Eliptico said that is not the case with NMC.

"We are glad to see that NMC continues to post strong enrollment numbers. Despite the challenges faced by NMC due to COVID-19, the college continues to expand its central role of providing academic and professional growth opportunities and building workforce capacity," Eliptico said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, NMC announced that 90% of its 247 classes will be taught online in the fall semester. For face-to-face classes, Eliptico said classrooms will have a limited number of desks to maximize social distancing.

Other upgrades at NMC include the installation of plexiglass sanitation barriers at each office; the retrofitting of service counters at the admissions, financial aid, and finance offices; and the installation of touchless faucets, touchless flush kits, and touchless soap and towel dispensers.

NMC will also engage its students virtually, through online tutoring activities, online "welcome week" activities, and by hosting other virtual seminars for students.

The Office of Student Activities and Leadership at the college has planned multiple online events such as virtual fitness classes and Zoom-based trivia nights for students. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

Mandatory quarantine for all travelers

All inbound travelers coming to the CNMI, no matter their point of origin, must undergo a minimum of five to seven days of quarantine at a designated government quarantine facility.

According to a statement from the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, all incoming travelers will undergo the mandatory quarantine of five to seven days, plus testing on arrival and the fifth day after arrival. This protocol takes effect at once and will last until further notice. This comes soon after Guam returned to lockdown last Sunday, when Guam saw over 90 positive cases over the last week.

Based on the CNMI protocol, individuals will wait for the result of their fifth day test for a minimum of 72 hours, and if they are negative, they will be released from quarantine.

For travelers who will be requesting for "essential work" approval, their request will be assessed based on the "strength of justification, point of origin, pre-arrival polymerase chain reaction test, and transit/flight plans."

"Entry requirements may be subject to change for travelers by the CNMI health official based on epidemiological factors, which include, but not limited to, travel in the last 30 days from low-risk areas," said the CHCC and task force statement. Low risk areas report a positive rate lower than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average or a 10% or lower positive rate over a seven -day rolling average. ***(Justine Nauta)***

45-day comment period for US Marines' relocation to Guam; deadline is Sept. 17

ASAN, Guam—Naval Facilities Engineering Command Marianas announces the availability of a Programmatic Agreement Memos for public review and comments through Sept. 17, 2020.

PA Memos provide an opportunity for interested members of the public to participate in the Section 106 consultation process required under the National Historic Preservation Act.

The following PA Memo provides new cultural and natural resources information associated with planned construction projects and are available on the NAVFAC Pacific Cultural Information webpage at http://go.usa.gov/kZWG. (Please note the URL is case sensitive).

Construction for P-296 Ordnance Operations Administration Building, Andersen Air Force Base, Guam: This project proposes to construct a low-rise reinforced concrete ordnance operations and administrative facility at Naval Support Activity Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

This is a 45-day public comment period and interested members of the community may submit comments via email to criwebcomment@navy.mil.

Those without internet access may obtain a printed copy of this PA Memo from the Guam Historic Resources Division at 490 Chalan Palasyo, Agana Heights, 96910 (in the Department of Parks and Recreation Office). ***(USN)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI)
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS (DPL)
Tel.: (670) 234-3751 • Website: www.dpl.gov.mp • Email: dpl@dpl.gov.mp

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE EXTENSION OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public land in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot 090 D 01 containing an area of approximately 3,000 square meters, more or less, situated in Gualo Rai, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands and website www.dpl.gov.mp for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is D & W Saipan, Inc. The list of officers for D & W Saipan Inc., are Hyeon Kyu Lee, as President/Director, Ei Sook Kim Lee, as Vice-President/Director, and Sung Soo Lim, as Secretary/Director.

iii. The proposed Extension Agreement and Second Amendment to the Lease Agreement is compliant with DPL regulations and was negotiated by the officers and directors of D & W Saipan, Inc., mainly Hyeon Kyu Lee and Sung Soo Lim.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of sales and services of general automotive products, including but not limited to fuel products auto inspection, office, and warehouse space necessary to conduct business and other related purposes.

The term of the proposed lease extension agreement is 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term of the lease agreement is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property plus the applicable percentage of Business Gross Receipts in DPL's regulation.

v. A copy of the proposed Extension Agreement and Second Amendment to the Lease Agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; 1st floor of the De'Ana Commercial Building, Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian. A copy will also be available online at www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Gualo Rai, Saipan.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before August 21, 2020 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT I MAPROPONI NA INEKSTENDIN ATKILON TANU' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106 (b) gi Lai Pupliku 15-2, i Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku ha nå'i nutisia guini put i intension-ña ni para u na ma'atkila palu na tanu' pupbliku giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas Siha. I manintiresåo na petsona siha gi halum pupbliku henerål siña muna'na'halum upiñon, imfotmasion, pat testimoñiun kinentra gi tinahguin prinoponi siha para i atkilon tanu' pupbliku. Kumu mås mo'na mapribeniyi ni Lai Pupbliku 15-2, i sigienti na pettanesi na imfotmasion ni madimånda ni para u mapupblika.

i. I maproponi na atkilon tanu' pupbliku madiskribi komu Lot 090 D 01 ni ha kunsisisti i åria gi kåsi guaha 3,000 square meters, mås pat menus, ni gaigi gi Gualo Rai, iya Saipan. I kopian i pumalu managuaha gi Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku yan gi website www.dpl.gov.mp para rinikonosimientu.

ii. The prospective lessee i D & W Saipan, Inc. I listan ufisiåt siha para D & W Saipan Inc., si Hyeon Kyu Lee, komu Presidenti/Direktot, si Ei Sook Kim Lee, komu Sigundu Presidenti/Direktot, yan si Sung Soo Lim, komu Sekritåriu/Direktot.

iii. I maproponi na Kuntråtan Inekstendin yan Sigundu na Amenda para i Kuntråtan Atkilon ha tåttitiyi i regulasión DPL yan manigosiu ni ufisiåt yan direktot nu i D & W Saipan, Inc., mayotmenti si Hyeon Kyu Lee yan si Sung Soo Lim.

iv. I lessee debi na u usa i lugåt para atyu ha' na rason nu mambendi yan nu "general automotive products," ingklusu låo ti chi'ña para "fuel products auto inspection," ufisina, o sino "warehouse space" nisisåriu para u makundukta i bisnis yan ottru manasosiåt na rason.

I tema nu i maproponi na kuntråtan atkilon inekstendi sa kinsi (15) åñus na tiempu.

I maproponi na atkilu gi kada' såkkan gi durântin i teman i kontråtan atkilon mapega gi pusientus nu i bålin "appraised fair market" i propiedåt yan i propiu na pusentun i Risibun Hina'halum Bisnis gi halum regulasion i DPL.

v. I kopian i maproponi na Kuntråtan Inekstendi yan i Sigundu na Amenda para i Kuntråtan Atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku, ni gaigi gi Sigundu (2nd) na bibiendan i Joeten Dandan Commercial Building iya Dandan, Saipan, gi primet (1st) na bibiendan i De'Ana Commercial Building, iya Songsong na sengsong, Luta; pat gi primet (1st) na bibiendan i King's Commercial Building, giya Tini'an. I kopia managuaha lokkui' gi online gi www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. I Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku tåya' ha risibi tinahguin propositu siha para u ma'atkila masuhetu na tanu' pupbliku gi Gualo Rai, Saipan.

vii. I Sekritåriun Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku debi na u aksepta tinigi' upiñon, imfotmasion, testimoniun kinentra pat tinahguin priniponi ginin i manintirisåo na pattida siha gi pat åntis di Agosto 21, 2020 gi ufisinan Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi giya Saipan, Luta pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL SÓBWEEYTÁL POMMWOL ATKKILÓÓNOL FALUWEER TOULAP

Llól abwungubwungúl fengál me Tálil 106 (b) reel Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer toulap isiis arongorong reel aar itittiw ngáli atkkilóónol ákkááw faluweer toulap llól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúw kka Efáng llól Marianas. Aramasal toulap ikka re tipáli rebwe isiisilong ischil mángemáng, data, views, ngáre angiingi reel pommw ikka ra siiweli ngáli atkkilóónol faluweer toulap. Alléghúl Toulap 15-2 ebwal ayoorai, arongorong ikka e amwirimwiritiw e ffil ebwe bwal akkatééwow.

i. Pommwol atkkilóónol faluweer toulap iye re óleghi igha nge Lot 090 D 01 iye e bwáá bwe 3,000 square meters, elapeló ngáre eghus, e lo Gualo Rai, Seipél. Pappidil bwuléy eyoor me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap me bwal wóól website www.dpl.gov.mp reel ubwe amwuri.

ii. Prospective lessee nge D & W Saipan, Inc. List-al officers ngáli D & W Saipan Inc., nge Hyeon Kyu Lee, bwe President/Director, Ei Sook Kim Lee, bwe Vice-President/Director, me Sung Soo Lim, bwe Sekkretóóriyo/Director.

iii. Pommwol Abwungubwung iye e Láálááyló me Aruwooowal Liiwel ngáli Abwungubwungúl Atkkilóón nge e tipifool fengál me mwóghutughutúl DPL me e ppwolsángi officers me directors-il D & W Saipan, Inc., spesiatemente Hyeon Kyu Lee me Sung Soo Lim.

iv. Schóól atkkilóón ebwe yááyá bwuléy ngáli akkaméélól me angaangil "general automotive products", e bwal schuulong nge ese mwutch ngáli "fuel products auto inspection", bwulasiyo, me "warehouse space" iye e ffil ngáli rebwe ffééru mwóghutughutúl "business" me ákkááw mwóghut ikka e toolong.

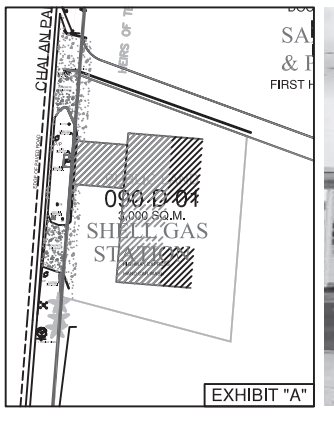
Pommwol abwungubwungúl láálááyil atkkilóón nge seigh me limoow ráágh.

pommwol atkkilóónol ghal ráágh nge e lo reel "percentage" sángi "appraised fair market value" reel falúw ebwal schuulong "applicable percentage" reel "Business gross Receipts" llól mwóghutughutúl DPL.

v. Pappidil pommwol Láálááyil Abwungubwung me Aruwoowal Liiwel ngáli Pommwol Atkkilóón emmwelil ubwe bweibwogh me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap, iye e lo 2nd floor reel Joeten Dandan Commercial Building me Dandan, Seipél; 1st floor reel De'Ana Commercial Building, Sóóbwol Songsong, Luuta; ngáre 1st floor reel Kings Commercial Building, Tchiliyól. Ebwal yoor pappidil mille online me www.dpl.gov.mp

vi. Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap rese bweibwogh pommwol siiwel ngáli faluweer toulap iye rebwe atkkilaay me Gualo Rai, Seipél.

vii. Sekkretóóriyal Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap re bweibwogh ischil mángemáng, views, angiingi ngáre pommwol siiwel sángi schóó kka re mwuschel isiisilong wóól ngáre mmwalil Elúwel 21, 2020 me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap iye e Seipél, Luuta, ngáre Tchiliyól.



Advisory for employers, CW-1 workers returning to Philippines

The Office of Philippine Honorary Consul to the CNMI Glicerio "Eli" Arago said that CNMI-based overseas Filipino workers, or OFWs, who are returning to the Philippines must follow the government-mandated and required COVID-19 testing guide and other procedures.

All employers of OFWs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are also requested to follow the guidelines and procedures when repatriating their Filipino CW-1 employees. This will assist and help manage expectations and make every Filipino workers' travel safe in these extraordinary times, said Arago

"These procedures are designed to ease and provide OFWs essential guide and what to expect when they get repatriated back to the Philippines," he explained.

OFWs returning home are reminded to complete three government online registrations. The main agency—Overseas Workers Welfare Administration—will take care of their COVID-19 testing (swab test) at the airport in the Philippines (Manila, Cebu, or Clark airport), including hotel accommodation quarantine while waiting for the results, currently around five to seven days, meals, and transportation from airport to hotel and to their residence.

The three government online registration links are: (1) http://oasis.owwa.gov.ph/ - register or update info prior to departure; (2) https://e-cif.redcross.org.ph/ - register as early as three days prior to arrival in the Philippines, Electronic Case Investigation Form (e-cif), and (3) http://uwianna.owwa.gov.ph/ - register to arrange transport to home province/residence from hotel quarantine facility that is also available as a mobile phone application, the link is https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.uwinatayo&hl=en

Families traveling together with at least one Filipino CW-1 (or OFW) will be considered all OFWs. This means that all related expenses will be covered by OWWA. Families travelling together with the OFW may stay in one room, maximum of two persons per room.

Another informational resource on the OWWA OASIS and UWIAN NA Program can also be viewed on YouTube through this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AveBvahidI

Arago is also encouraging employers of Filipino CW-1 visa holders or OFWs planning to return home during this COVID-19 pandemic to closely review the requirements, including updates of the airline and connecting airport that changes from time to time.

Arago said his office will assist employers who are planning for the repatriation of their CW-1 Filipino workers. Employers are requested to notify the Philippine Honorary Consulate at least two weeks in advance when seeking repatriation assistance and provide the following information: (a) list of names for Filipino CW-1 for repatriation; and (b) flight details in order for the Philippine Honorary Consulate-CNMI to notify ahead of time the Philippine Overseas Labor Office-Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C and OWWA for advance assistance request at the airport.

The Philippine Honorary Consulate-CNMI Office is located at Sun Palace Hotel and can be reached through phone at 235-0560 Ext. 115/131 or 233-6293. ***(PR)***

AS GUAM RETURNS TO PCOR 1

PCG Guam suspends all consular services

The Philippine Consulate General in Agana, Guam, suspended all consular services effective yesterday, Aug. 17, 2020, as Guam is placed again under lockdown for the next two weeks. This means all confirmed appointments from Aug. 17, 2020, onwards are now considered cancelled, said PCG said in an advisory issued on its Facebook page.

The suspension will be in place until the government of Guam determines that the threat of COVID-19 has been effectively managed to merit downgrading from PCOR 1 status.

"During this time, we will also not be able to retrieve and process mailed-in documents for applicable consular services," said the PCG advisory. "We apologize for the inconvenience that this will cause, but we reassure those who have confirmed time slots that we will do what we can to restore your appointment to the same time, or give you priority access when we restart the consular online appointment ticket system. However, our collective priority at this time should be to fully comply with all mandated restrictions and help ensure that Guam is not overwhelmed by this pandemic.

For any inquiries or for assistance, the Philippine Consulate General in Agana may be reached via email as follows:

- For passport concerns: aganapcg.passports@dfa.gov.ph
- For visa concerns: aganapcg.visa@dfa.gov.ph
- Other consular matters: aganapcg.consular@dfa.gov.ph
- Assistance to Nationals: aganapcg.atn@dfa.gov.ph

"We recommend that you include in your email a contact number and convenient time so that we can call and clarify specific details regarding your circumstance when needed," the advisory states.

For emergency cases (and only for emergencies), call the 24/7 duty phone at +1(671) 488.4630. ***(PR)***

Schools to be assessed before reopening

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

All private and public schools in the CNMI will need to be inspected, assessed, and receive approval before being allowed to reopen, according to an Office of the Governor statement last Thursday.

It said that CNMI schools are allowed to safely reopen subject to approval of reopening plans and assessment of facilities. This was the result of talks among the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., and education stakeholders from the Northern Marianas College, Public School System, and the Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools.

"Due to the continued success of the CNMI's COVID-19 preventative measures at the borders, as well as the cooperation of our community in adhering to guidance from our health officials, the CNMI remains safe from the spread of COVID-19. Health and safety protocols have been discussed by the COVID-19 Task Force with the Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools, PSS, NMC, and CHCC, to safely reopen schools and permit in-person instruction," said the statement.

So far, some schools have already undergone assessment and have been cleared to reopen, including the Saipan Community School, which resumed face-to-face classes last week.

Also resuming face-to-face classes is Saipan International School, which has been cleared by the task force to resume physical classes today.

Mount Carmel School, which was supposed to resume face-to-face classes on Aug. 6, has opted to resume classes online on Aug. 17 as they wait for their shipment of safety supplies.

The Public School System is also set to resume remote learning on Sept. 8.

The COVID-19 Task Force, Department of Public Works Building Code officials, and CHCC will review reopening plans of schools, as well as conduct site assessments to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements based on classroom square footage and reopening guidance provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres added that Directive 15 of the CNMI COVID-19 Emergency Directives will be rescinded to ensure full implementation of reopening schools as part of the CNMI's ongoing economic and educational reopening plans.

"Based on our discussions with our educational leaders from NMC, PSS, and our private school coalition, the CNMI is in a better position to safely reopen schools through compliance with social distancing and safeguarding our students, teachers, parents, and school staff," said Torres. We have been successful in keeping COVID-19 away from our community by identifying cases at the border. Reopening education and our overall economy will help bring a sense of normalcy, ensure continued learning for our students, and assist our teachers and staff with their salaries and income. We also understand that our parents and teachers must feel safe and secure, which is why we want school reopening plans to be approved first…so that we can successfully do this together," Torres said.

With clearance from the task force, schools will be allowed to implement an in-person instructional model, an online model, or a hybrid of both.

AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE

TakeCare Saipan office closed until Aug. 24

The Saipan TakeCare customer service, provider, and sales office is closed until Monday, Aug. 24, for cleaning and sanitizing, as a precautionary measure for a potential COVID-19 exposure.

The three employees who work at the Saipan TakeCare office are being tested and will be quarantined for the next five days.

The wearing of masks, temperature checks, and social distancing is strictly enforced for anyone entering the Saipan TakeCare office for the safety of employees and visitors. If an employee or visitor is not wearing a mask or if their temperature is over 100°F, that person is not allowed to enter the office.

TakeCare continues to remind employees, families, and health plan members to take precautionary measures: wash your hands for 20 seconds; stay at least 6 feet away from one another; wear your face masks properly; if you feel sick, please stay home; continue to sanitize your work area daily ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB20-CHCC/DPH-IMMUNIZATION-001

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: AUGUST 25, 2020 TIME:10:00AM

"CHCC VACCINE STORAGE AND HANDLING EQUIPMENT"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP20-OGM-103

SUBMISSION DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"TO CONDUCT FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE 2MW UTILITY SCALE GRID CONNECTED ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM FOR THE ISLAND OF ROTA. A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO **MR. FRANKIE F. ANGEL, GRANTS SPECIALIST**, VIA E-MAIL TO frankie.angel@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS 04:30 P.M., SEPTEMBER 03, 2020**.

PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR **10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, SEPTEMBER 09, 2020** AT THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, CAPITOL HILL, OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT. ***PLEASE NOTE ALL PARTICIPANTS/ATTENDEES ARE REQUIRED TO USE A MASK AND EXERCISE SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING.***

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Wednesday, August 19, 2020 at 8am*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (07/15/2020)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
- Dr. Abner Pasatiempo (Telephonic Interview Re his Application)
- Letter from CHCC CEO Esther L. Muna
- Update on Pending Case (Legal Counsel)

VII. Director's Report
- Update on Propose Regulations
- FSMB Virtual Meeting – Impact of COVID-19 on Physician Well-Being and Patient Safety – August 27 from 6pm-7:30pm (CDT) Saipan Time - August 28 from 8am-9:30am)

VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature
X. Old Business
XI. New Business
- Status for testing ability for LMFT

XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
A. New Application
B. Renewal Applications
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

/s/ Theodore R. Parker, R.Ph., MPH
Chairman

GOP Kickoff Rally

The NMI Republican Party kicks off the campaign season Friday with a roadside waving along the Beach Road intersection in San Jose, in an event attended by hundreds of supporters, with the candidates running to be elected present, as well as Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, who came to show their support.

IVA MAURIN

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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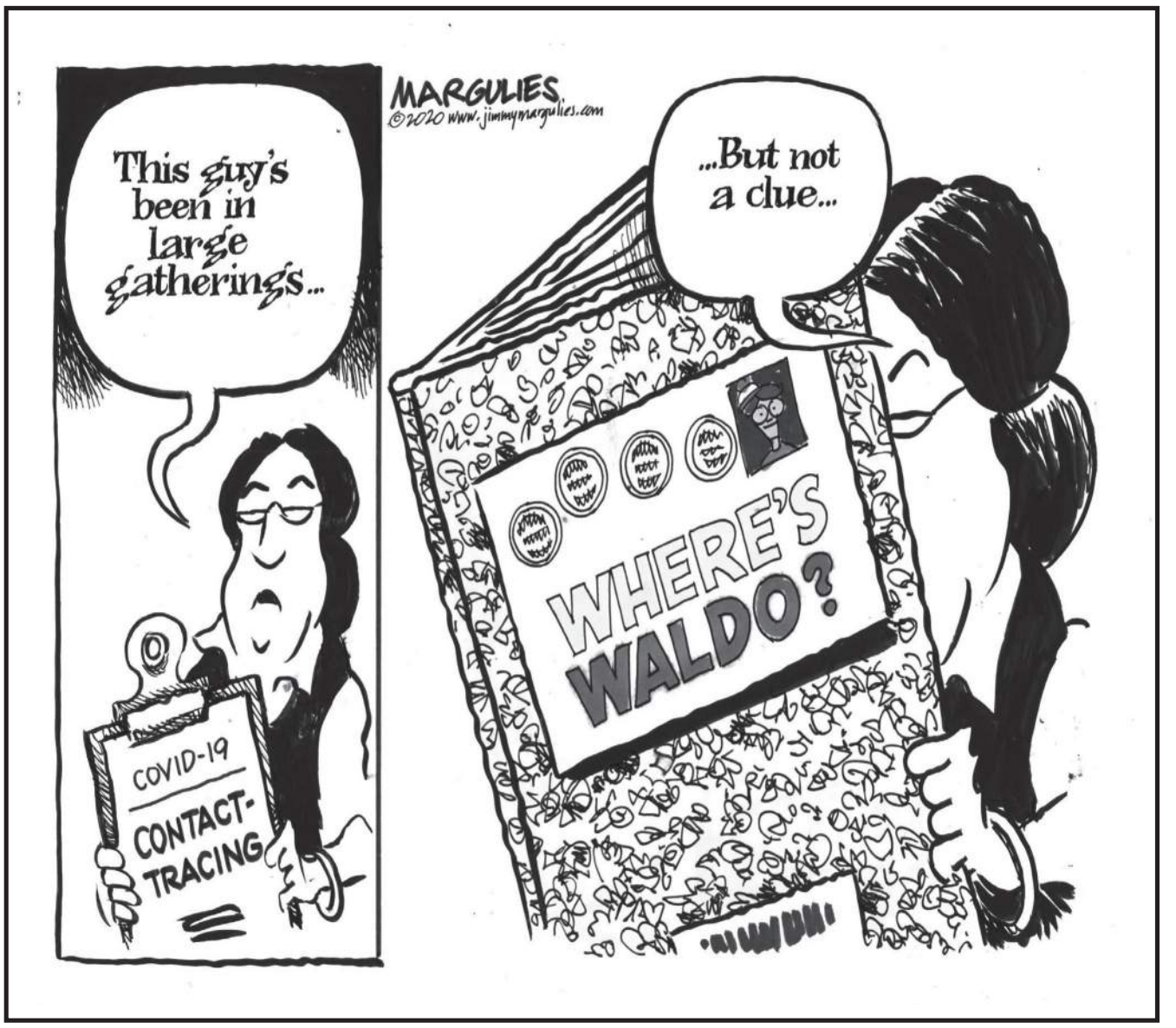


EDITORIAL

The US needs a new unemployment insurance system

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed crippling defects in America's unemployment-insurance system. The most essential short-term fix is to extend and adjust the emergency benefits that expired at the end of July. In due course, though, the system needs more than just the latest in a yearslong series of ad hoc patches. It requires comprehensive reform—to assure workers of adequate protection, promote employment, insulate the economy against protracted downturns and spread the cost more equitably.

The current system is a complicated federal-state partnership. Both levels of government collect taxes and pay benefits, with the states designing and administering the systems, subject to federal rules designed to encourage ample relief. In principle, this has advantages. It means programs can be designed to reflect local preferences, and it allows different policies to be tried, tested and compared. But it's time to admit that, in practice, this approach has failed. The needed comprehensive reform can best be achieved by asking the federal government to play a bigger role.

What went wrong? In short, tax competition among the states has squeezed funding over the years, which in turn has meant less generous benefits, narrower eligibility, and administrative systems starved of staffing and technology. This failure imposes a cost not just on the states concerned but on the whole U.S. economy.

Before the pandemic, the proportion of unemployed workers receiving benefits had fallen to less than 30 percent. The U.S. spends only about 0.1% of gross domestic product on helping workers with job search and training—roughly one-fifth of what other advanced economies do. The system as a whole delivers a smaller countercyclical stimulus than is needed during a severe or sustained slowdown. Assailed by a crisis like today's, it threatens to break down altogether.

After the financial crash, Congress had to enact exceptional extensions of unemployment benefits. The COVID-19 slowdown also prompted a series of emergency federal interventions, including Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (an extra 13 weeks of relief for eligible recipients), Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (up to 39 weeks of benefits for some workers not otherwise covered), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (an additional $600 a week on top of regular unemployment benefits), and more.

Granted, unforeseen emergencies demand flexibility and innovation. Even so, systems should be made as robust as possible. The existing benefits infrastructure was weak to begin with, and partly for that reason it has struggled to cope with this onslaught of temporary measures. A stronger underlying system would have needed less urgent backup—and the interventions it did require would have been easier to administer.

Persistent dysfunction in Washington makes it foolish to rely so heavily on emergency arrangements. As far as

See US on Next Page

Learning from the *hibakushas*

"They were covered with blood and burned and blackened and swollen, and the flesh was hanging from the bones. Parts of their bodies were missing, and some were carrying their own eyeballs in their hands. And as they collapsed, their stomach burst open."

But war is necessary, right?

The speaker, quoted recently on NPR, is 88-year-old Setsuko Thurlow, one of planet Earth's remaining hibakushas: survivors of the atomic devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. She was in Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945. Since that day, she has devoted her life to the elimination of nuclear weapons—that is to say, to creating awareness. Everybody knows that war is hell, but hell is just an abstraction, easily shrugged off, unless you live through it.

Seventy-five years later, I hear the words of *hibakushas* and feel my soul plunge into emptiness. Why wasn't twice enough?

From the Atomic Heritage Foundation:

"Nuclear fission begins in 0.15 microseconds with a single neutron, initiating a supercritical chain reaction that increases the temperature to several million degrees Fahrenheit hotter than the surface of the sun at the time the bomb casing blows apart.

"It is the peak of the morning rush hour in Hiroshima. Above the city, the fireball is rapidly expanding.

".1 seconds: The fireball has expanded to one hundred feet in diameter combined with a temperature of 500,000 F. Neutrons and gamma rays reach the ground. The ionizing radiation is responsible for causing the majority of the radiological damage to all exposed humans, animals and other biological organisms."

And again, why?

Another *hibakusha*, the writer Kyoko Hayashi, also a survivor of the Nagasaki blast (she died in 2017), wrote a story, H. Patricia Hynes informs us, in which she created a new calendar: the "A-bomb calendar." The calendar designates 1945 as the world's new Year One, because: "The significance of the birth of Christ or Buddha pales in comparison" to the birth of the nuclear era.

Could anything more clearly say "God is dead"? Whether 1945 is officially labeled Year One or not, that's what it is: the birth of humankind's transcendence of moral sanity. Yeah, man, our fate is in our own hands now, not that of a divine force, and we're going to play with that power, tease ourselves with it, to the very brink of planetary suicide (and maybe beyond). The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, for instance, reset its Doomsday Clock this year to 100 seconds to midnight. Too bad!

By ROBERT C. KOEHLER
Tribune News Service

Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist and nationally syndicated writer. His book, Courage Grows Strong at the Wound, *is still available. Contact him at koehlercw@gmail.com, visit his website at commonwonders.com or listen to him at Voices of Peace radio.*

I write these words sardonically, not actually believing that humanity's moral sanity is gone—just that it's lost in the wilderness, politically disconnected. Apparently no *hibakusha*, or someone who shares their understanding, has ever been the leader of a nuclear power. No *hibakusha* has even been an American president. Is it possible for this to change before a nuclear confrontation—or accident—destroys the future?

The essential paradox of disarmament is that nuclear power, and thus nuclear bombs, having been invented, will never go away. They can't be "un-invented." The logic that flows out of this bit of reality seems to be that we have no choice, then, but to push in the opposite direction: spend trillions of dollars endlessly upgrading these weapons. They're a done deal. It's too late for peace.

Against this logic: "A coalition of progressive groups on Tuesday delivered a petition with over 4,800 signatures to the presidential campaigns of President Donald Trump and presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden urging both 2020 candidates to incorporate 'a vision for peace and serious nuclear disarmament' into their platforms," Common Dreams reports.

The inner cynic snorts. This will never happen! But it's crucial to push this agenda forward anyway, and force one's personal inner cynic to consider the consequences of doing nothing. ("Parts of their bodies were missing, and some were carrying their own eyeballs in their hands ... ")

And so the coalition has presented the two presidential campaigns with five principles to embrace: 1. No first use of nuclear weapons. 2. Promotion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty:

See LEARNING on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Russia's Sputnik vaccine gamble is all about Vladimir Putin

By CLARA FERREIRA MARQUES
Bloomberg Opinion

Clara Ferreira Marques is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering commodities and environmental, social and governance issues. Previously, she was an associate editor for Reuters Breakingviews, and editor and correspondent for Reuters in Singapore, India, the U.K., Italy and Russia.

There was no clearer way of signaling how Russia sees its coronavirus vaccine: Moscow named it Sputnik, after the satellite whose launch in 1957 marked the start of the space race, and forced the West to confront an unexpected, and terrifying, technology gap.

Announcing the world's first regulatory approval last week, President Vladimir Putin sought to repeat the propaganda masterstroke. Yet the rushed endorsement, after just two months of small-scale human testing, is less an affirmation of Russian scientific prowess than it is an expression of Putin's hankering for Soviet-era international clout. It's a premature victory lap that suggests a worrying need for affirmation at home too.

Russia has been in a hurry to win the vaccine race from the start, spotting the political benefit of being first with the inoculation the world is waiting for. It said in July that one of its prototypes, developed by the Gamaleya Institute, had completed the initial phase of tests. Then it began talking up plans for a mass vaccination program in the fall, brushing aside accusations that Moscow-backed hackers tried to steal research abroad. My colleagues in Moscow reported officials and billionaire tycoons had been getting the shots since April.

Now, ignoring public objections from the trade body representing the world's top pharmaceutical companies in Russia, the country has pressed ahead with an official green light _ even before the gold-standard, phase 3 trial that would typically involve thousands of subjects. Sweeping aside standard research procedure, Putin said in a televised meeting that all necessary checks had been cleared. It's a triumph of spin over scientific protocol that even U.S. President Donald Trump hasn't been able to pull off.

The scale of the gamble makes it hard to comprehend, even in a country that has counted more than 900,000 cases of the pneumonia-like illness. With only early-stage tests, as my colleague Max Nisen pointed out, Russia is taking a huge bet on the vaccine actually protecting enough people, safely. While adverse effects from vaccines are rare, they are not unheard of. Corner-cutting will hardly reassure a skeptical population.

There is also the fact that a national regulator's OK doesn't win you the global vaccine race. According to the World Health Organization, several candidate vaccines are already ahead of Russia's in the final phase of testing, including one developed by the University of Oxford and AstraZeneca Plc, which uses a similar technology. Some, unlike Russia, have published data to support their claims.

So why bother? First, for the glory. Even if this announcement has been met with widespread skepticism, the White House felt the need to reassure U.S. citizens that it was moving as fast as possible. Developing nations, meanwhile, are listening carefully to a country that might share its vaccine with them.

Then, for the research kudos. Putin wants to restore a reputation for scientific excellence that has been tarnished by years of underinvestment after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and a dramatic brain drain.

Most importantly, perhaps, this is about burnishing goodwill at home.

The rush in the laboratory is proportionate to Putin's need for affirmation in the face of weak approval ratings _ at record lows, even after voters approved constitutional changes that give him the opportunity to stay in power until 2036. In today's Russia, there is still a warm feeling around Soviet successes like the space program. That's true even if many of those firsts were as much about the headlines as they were about genuine evolution. After former factory worker Valentina Tereshkova became the first female cosmonaut in 1963, it was another 19 years before another woman followed her into orbit.

Judy Twigg, a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University who studies Russian politics and health, points out that it is much like the virtual reality of Putin's superweapons announcement in 2018, which promised invincible next-generation technology. It was made against the backdrop of genuine advances, but suggested a need for big wins the president could boast about _ even if, like some of that military technology or a promised AIDS vaccine, they don't ever materialize.

Putin clearly wants a win against a virus that spoiled his 2020. The landmark constitutional plebiscite intended to cement his leadership was delayed by the pandemic, as was a Victory Parade marking the 75th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany, which few world leaders attended. An oil crisis hasn't helped matters. While the economy is doing less badly than feared, households are still in pain, protests persist in the country's Far East, Belarus is in revolt on his doorstep and there are potentially awkward elections for regional assemblies in September.

With a vaccine promise, he is again a protective father of the people: To make the point, Putin remarked publicly that one of his own, rarely spoken-of, daughters was inoculated.

Much will depend on what happens next, beginning with the promised publication of data on the vaccine in a major international journal. Russia has dismissed its doubters, but facts will be key to winning them over.

In the end, a historic space exploit may not have been the best metaphor to choose. These days Russia's program faces setbacks, including competition from private companies such as billionaire Elon Musk's SpaceX. Tripping up in the vaccine race will be costlier.

LEARNING

From Page 8

no nuclear testing. 3. Cancel the $2 trillion nuclear weapons modernization program. 4. Lead with diplomacy. 5. Declare global nuclear disarmament as your goal.

I confess that I do not know when or how such principles will ever be politically embraced, though my hope is that a public outcry too large to ignore—larger than the political and financial clout of the military-industrial complex—will eventually push American, and global, politics in that direction. The other scenario is to wait till after the holocaust to take action. That seems to be the choice of the status quo.

So let me add one more principle to this mix. Nuclear disarmament can never be achieved when war by other means is still a go-to option. The time has come to demilitarize completely: Say no to war, and mean it. Without disarmament at that scale, nuclear disarmament will never be a certainty, even if the world dismantles existing nuclear weapons. They can't be uninvented. What I'm saying is that nuclear disarmament does not mean humanity somehow forgetting—mysteriously no longer knowing—how to rebuild its nukes. It means knowing how not to rebuild them!

This means knowing how not to wage war. If 1945 is truly the new Year One—the year of human transcendence—nuclear weapons are merely the precursor of their opposite: the birth of peace. Can we actually begin to embrace the values we've pretended to espouse for far too long? Waging peace is more complex than waging war, but we've given ourselves no choice but to take on the challenge. At long last.

US

From Page 8

possible, the unemployment insurance system should run on autopilot. If a recession is deeper and more protracted than usual, the system by design should provide more support for longer, without special intervention.

Today's Congress is unlikely to take on this work. At the moment, even maintaining essential support during an ongoing crisis seems beyond it. But in due course a more productive alliance between a different president and a new Congress could and should make fundamental reform of unemployment insurance a priority. The crucial elements are automatic funding from federal revenue, broader eligibility (so that gig workers and others are covered), a national formula based on replacing a fixed share of income up to a ceiling, efforts to improve job-search assistance and other so-called active labor measures, and resources to ensure that the system is simple to use and effectively administered.

Together with a substantially higher Earned Income Tax Credit to boost the earnings of the working poor, a repurposed federal system of unemployment insurance would make America's labor market fairer, more efficient and less vulnerable to ordinary downturns. And when emergencies come along, as they will, coping with them wouldn't test the system to the point of failure.

(c) 2020 *Bloomberg News*

Release the doves: In praise of the Trump-brokered Israel-UAE deal

President Donald Trump did a very great thing in forging peace between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, making it the third Arab state to establish normal relations with the Jewish state. Congratulations to him and his senior adviser, Jared Kushner.

From the time that the oil-rich Gulf state achieved independence in 1971, Israel was a sworn enemy. Now Israel becomes a partner in trade, diplomacy, technology and security. There will be direct flights from Ben Gurion Airport to Dubai, the busiest international hub on Earth. There will be embassies and ambassadors.

As part of the agreement, talk of possible Israeli moves towards annexation of the West Bank have been suspended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That's something that Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed can show the Arab and Muslim world, along with the opening of the Holy City's holiest places to millions more Muslim pilgrims.

The Emiratis are a major player in the Mideast, with the largest economy after the Saudis. They allied with Washington against the meddling of the mad mullahs of Iran, who wage constant war on Israel.

The larger lesson here is talk works, a message recalcitrant Palestinians should get through their skulls. Talk worked when Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel under American sponsorship. Talk worked when Jordan did so. And talk has worked a third time.

Just because Trump touts a victory doesn't mean it's fake. America, Israel and the wider world just notched a big win. Applaud.

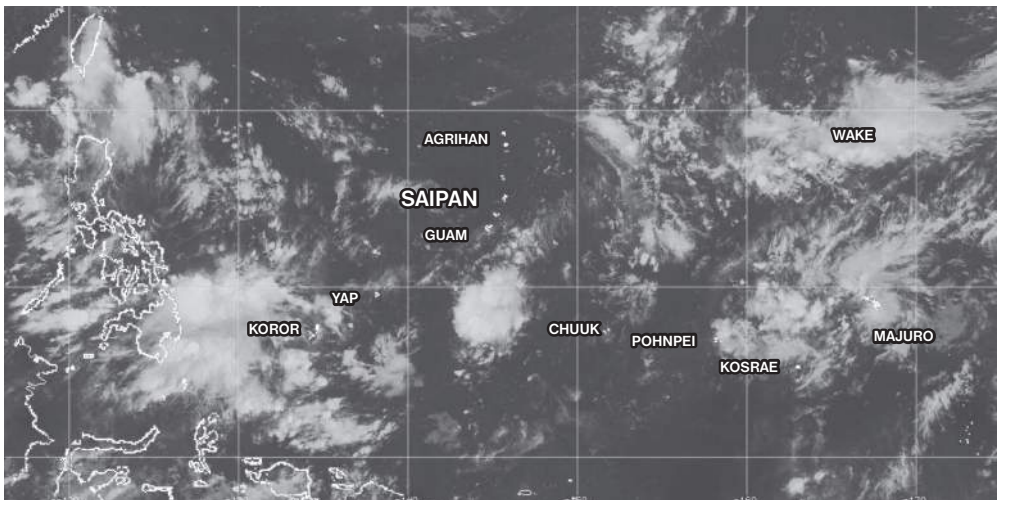
(c) 2020 *New York Daily News*

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly sunny. Isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
86° 76°	86° 76°	86° 76°	87° 76°	87° 76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:33 AM, MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

ASCAT surface analysis from last night and local observations indicate light east to northeast winds over the Marianas. Models keep winds light with winds 10 mph or less through the whole forecast. Models are also consistent in showing no large scale weather features affecting the local area. With these conditions local weather will be at the mercy of adequate moisture, daytime heating, and possibly by favorable upper-level winds. The light winds and daytime heating will lead to a higher chance for thunderstorms and scattered showers over Guam during the afternoon.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	89° / 77°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	87° / 81°
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	86° / 82°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:02 AM	6:38 PM
Wednesday	6:03 AM	6:37 PM
Thursday	6:03 AM	6:37 PM
Friday	6:03 AM	6:36 PM
Saturday	6:03 AM	6:36 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:50 AM	6:06 PM	-
Wednesday	5:51 AM	6:57 PM	-
Thursday	6:53 AM	7:45 PM	-
Friday	7:53 AM	8:31 PM	-
Saturday	8:52 AM	9:15 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	58° / 55°
Beijing	Thunderstorms	81° / 69°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	88° / 80°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	86° / 75°
London	Showers	72° / 61°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	96° / 73°
Manila	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°
Melbourne	Showers	59° / 48°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	89° / 79°
New York	Mostly Sunny	85° / 68°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	98° / 78°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	79° / 61°
Busan	Sunny	88° / 77°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	91° / 68°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	91° / 69°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	79° / 60°
Seoul	Cloudy	87° / 73°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	88° / 76°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	86° / 68°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:55 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.30
5:57 AM	LOW TIDE	2.03
1:14 PM	HIGH TIDE	-0.19
8:14 PM	LOW TIDE	2.04

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4, 6	UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

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Business

Pelosi to call House back into session to vote on USPS bill

AP
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Sunday she is calling the House back into session over the crisis at the U.S. Postal Service, setting up a political showdown amid growing concerns that the Trump White House is trying to undermine the agency ahead of the election.

Pelosi is cutting short lawmakers' summer recess with a vote expected the Saturday after the Democratic National Convention on legislation that would prohibit changes at the agency as tensions mount. President Donald Trump's new postmaster general, Louis DeJoy, has sparked nationwide outcry over delays, new prices and cutbacks just as millions of Americans will be trying to vote by mail to avoid polling places during the coronavirus outbreak.

"In a time of a pandemic, the Postal Service is Election Central," Pelosi wrote Sunday in a letter to colleagues, who had been expected to be out of session until September. "Lives, livelihoods and the life of our American Democracy are under threat from the president."

The decision to recall the House, made after a weekend of high-level leadership discussions, carries a political punch. Voting in the House will highlight the issue after the weeklong convention nominating Joe Biden as the party's presidential pick and pressure the Republican-held Senate to respond. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell sent senators home for a summer recess.

Earlier Sunday, Democratic lawmakers demanded that leaders of the Postal Service testify at an emergency oversight hearing Aug. 24 on mail delays.

The House Oversight and Reform Committee said it wants to hear from DeJoy and from the chair of the Postal Service board of governors, Robert "Mike" Duncan.

With heightened scrutiny of its operations, the Postal Service is now requesting a temporary preelection rate increase, from mid-October through Christmas, although not for first-class letters.

The agency did not immediately respond to requests for comment about whether the two men would appear before the House committee. But it said Sunday it would stop removing its distinctive blue mailboxes through mid-November following complaints from customers and members of Congress that the collection boxes were being taken away.

"Given the recent customer concerns the Postal Service will postpone removing boxes for a period of 90 days while we evaluate our customers' concerns," Postal Service spokeswoman Kimberly Frum said.

House Democrats are expected to discuss the lawmakers' schedule details on a conference call on Monday and were likely to be in session next Saturday, a senior Democratic aide said on condition of anonymity because the plans were private.

The legislation being prepared for the vote, the "Delivering for America Act," would prohibits the Postal Service from implementing any changes to operations or level of service it had in place on Jan. 1.

DeJoy, a major Republican donor and ally of the president who took control of the agency in June, has pledged to modernize the money-losing agency to make it more efficient, and has eliminated most overtime for postal workers, imposed restrictions on transportation and reduced of the quantity and use of mail-processing equipment.

Trump said last week that he was blocking a $25 billion emergency injection sought by the Postal Service, as well as a Democratic proposal to provide $3.6 billion in additional election money to the states. The Republican president worries that mail-in voting could cost him reelection. The money for the post office is intended to help with processing an expected surge of mail-in ballots. Both funding requests have been tied up in congressional negotiations over a new coronavirus relief package.

On Saturday, Trump tried to massage his message, saying he supports increasing money for the Postal Service. He said he was refusing to capitulate to Democrats on other parts of the relief package, including funding for states weighed down by debt accumulated before the pandemic.

But the president's critics were not appeased, contending that Trump has made the calculation that a lower voter turnout would improve his chances of winning a second term.

"What you are witnessing is a president of the United States who is doing everything he can to suppress the vote, make it harder for people to engage in mail-in balloting at a time when people will be putting their lives on the line by having to go out to a polling station and vote," said Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.

In announcing the upcoming hearing, congressional Democrats said in a statement: "The postmaster general and top Postal Service leadership must answer to the Congress and the American people as to why they are pushing these dangerous new policies that threaten to silence the voices of millions, just months before the election."

1st Mediterranean cruise sets sail after virus tests

ROME (AP)—Cruise ship passengers had their temperatures checked and took COVID-19 tests Sunday so they could set sail on what is being billed as the first Mediterranean cruise after Italy's pandemic lockdown.

The cruise ship company MSC has made the procedures, for crew as well as passengers, part of its new health and safety protocols. The MSC Grandiosa, which was christened last year, set sail from the northern Italian port of Genoa on Sunday evening for a seven-night cruise in the western Mediterranean.

Any one testing positive, or with a fever, or having other COVID-19 symptoms was denied boarding, the company said. Guest must wear face masks in elevators and other areas where social distancing is not possible. The crew spent time in quarantine before the start of the cruise.

Earlier this month, the Italian government gave its approval for cruise ships to once again depart from Italy's ports but limited cruise ships to sailing with 70% capacity.

MSC declined to say how many passengers were sailing on this cruise. Among the port calls for the Grandiosa, MSC's flagship, are Naples, Palermo, Sicily and Valletta, Malta.

Malta is one of four Mediterranean countries that Italy now requires travelers arriving from to have COVID-19 tests.

For now, MSC was limiting its guests to the residents of Europe's 26-nation Schengen visa free travel zone.

MSC said every guest and crew member on board will be given a wristband that "facilitates contactless transactions around the ship as well as providing contact and proximity tracing."

Cruise ships and the business they bring to many Italian cities during port excursions make up an important segment of Italy's vital tourism industry. An estimated 12 million cruise ship passengers arrived or departed from Italian ports last year or made port calls in Italy, according to industry figures.

Japan's economy shrinks at record rate, slammed by pandemic

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's economy shrank at annual rate of 27.8% in April-June, the worst contraction on record, as the coronavirus pandemic slammed consumption and trade, according to government data released Monday.

The Cabinet Office reported that Japan's preliminary seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product, or GDP, the sum of a nation's goods and services, fell 7.8% quarter on quarter.

The annual rate shows what the number would have been if continued for a year.

Japanese media reported the latest drop was the worst since World War II. But the Cabinet Office said comparable records began in 1980. The previous worst contraction was in 2009, during the global financial crisis of 2008-2009.

The world's third largest economy was already ailing when the virus outbreak struck late last year. The fallout has since gradually worsened both in COVID-19 cases and social distancing restrictions.

The economy shrank 0.6% in the January-March period, and contracted 1.8% in the October-December period last year, meaning that Japan slipped into recession in the first quarter of this year. Recession is generally defined as two consecutive quarters of contraction.

Japanese economic growth was flat in July-September. Growth was minimal the quarter before that.

For the April-June period, Japan's exports dropped at a whopping annual rate of 56%, while private consumption dipped at an annual rate of nearly 29%.

That was without any full shutdown of businesses to contain coronavirus outbreaks, which have worsened in the past month, pushing the total number of confirmed cases to over 56,000.

Analysts say the economy is expected to recover gradually, once the impact of the pandemic is curbed. Japan's export-dependent economy relies heavily on growth in China, where outbreaks of the novel coronavirus began and have since subsided. But demand has remained subdued.

Development of a vaccine or medical treatment for COVID-19 would also help, but prospects for such breakthroughs are unclear.

Since GDP measures what the economy did compared to the previous quarter, such a deep contraction will likely be followed by a rebound, unless conditions deteriorate further.

That doesn't necessarily mean the economy will return to pre-pandemic levels. Some experts doubt air travel and other sectors will ever fully recover.

On the other hand, some companies have reaped the rewards of people staying at home, such as the Japanese video-game maker Nintendo Co., whose recent profits have boomed.

Nation

Trump motivates Democrats to rally behind Biden, Harris

AP
In this Aug. 12, 2020, file photo Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden and his running mate Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., arrive to speak at a news conference at Alexis Dupont High School in Wilmington, Del.

ATLANTA (AP)—For the second time in four years, the Democratic presidential primary pitted the expanding progressive movement against an eventually victorious establishment. But as the party gathers virtually this week to nominate Joe Biden for the presidency, the possibility of President Donald Trump's reelection has become Democrats' unifying and energizing force.

"Nobody fits neatly and tightly into any one bucket," said Georgia Democratic Chairwoman Nikema Williams. "What we all fit into is knowing that right now we don't have leadership in our country, and it's hurting all of us."

That's an important shift from 2016, when Hillary Clinton struggled to build a coalition between her supporters and those who backed Sen. Bernie Sanders, who again finished as runner-up this year. It reflects both the work Biden has done to court the left and the urgency among Democrats to defeat Trump, which has only intensified amid the pandemic, economic turmoil and a national reckoning on racism.

Still, the party's ideological splits haven't vanished. There are disagreements over how to achieve universal health care, make higher education affordable, overhaul law enforcement practices and reengage with countries that are questioning America's role in the world.

Leaders on the left warn that Biden must still keep their interests in mind, offering a reminder that even a November victory won't guarantee a united front during a Biden presidency.

"Progressives are going to vote against Trump," said Stephanie Taylor, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, but she called it "demoralizing and wrong" for Biden and the Democratic National Committee to give convention airtime to figures like billionaire Mike Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor who spent more than $500 million of his own money running for the nomination.

Taylor nodded at Biden's pick of Kamala Harris as his running mate, the first Black woman on a major party's ticket. But she cast the California senator, who is also of Asian descent, as an establishment politician alongside Biden, a former vice president first elected to the Senate in 1972.

"If Biden and Harris want to energize progressives to donate and volunteer," Taylor said, "they need to elevate leaders like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Julian Castro, and policies like canceling student debt and Medicare for All. Progressive energy matters, and voter energy matters. We're fighting Trump as hard as we can right now—just don't take that for granted."

In fact, Ocasio-Cortez, the New York congresswoman and a face of young progressives, and Castro, who set the 2020 presidential field's left flank on immigration, will speak during the four-night convention. But Taylor's sentiment underscores the complexity in Biden's effort to corral the spectrum of voters dissatisfied with Trump.

Despite Biden's five decades at the core of the Democratic Party, he's not a natural fit for every faction in 2020.

As younger activists gain clout in shaping the party's priorities, Biden will be 78 on Inauguration Day, making him the oldest person to assume the presidency if he's elected. As a white man, his core constituencies are white moderates and Black women, who revived his campaign in part because of their appreciation of Biden's service as vice president to Barack Obama, the first Black president. And his reverence for institutions such as Congress is at odds with the most intense voices of both political parties, where activists often put a premium on outsiders and aren't eager to compromise.

Quarantine requirements may delay return to in-person school

By PAT EATON-ROBB and MIKE CATLALINI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shannon Silver had planned to take her family on a trip from her home in Connecticut to visit relatives in Ohio just before the start of the school year for her two children.

But she and her husband reversed course when people traveling from Ohio were added to a list of those who must quarantine for 14 days upon entering Connecticut. That requirement might have meant her 10-year-old son would miss the first day of sixth grade at St. Matthew School in Bristol.

"We weren't going to do that, especially at the beginning of the school year," Silver said. "Plus, he really didn't want to miss the last two weeks of summer by having to quarantine."

The family instead went to see other relatives in Colorado, which wasn't on the list.

As states around the country require visitors from areas with high rates of coronavirus infections to quarantine upon arrival, children taking end-of-summer vacations to hot spots are facing the possibility of being forced to skip the start of in-person learning at their schools.

More than a dozen states have such travel advisories, including many in the Northeast along with Alaska, Kentucky and Ohio.

More than 30 states are on the list issued by Connecticut, New York and New Jersey in an attempt to prevent another surge of COVID-19 in the region, which was among the hardest hit early in the pandemic. As schools in the Northeast prepare to open early next month, officials are urging parents to be mindful of that guidance while planning any Labor Day getaways.

In Connecticut, where infection numbers are among the lowest in the country, more than half of schools are planning to open for in-person learning. Gov. Ned Lamont made it clear this month that neither students nor teachers would be exempt from quarantine if they visit a hot spot.

"Don't go to South Florida; don't go to Phoenix, Arizona, and skip El Paso, Texas, and I would stay away from Southern California for a while too," said Lamont, a Democrat. "I would stay close to home. I think there are some amazing places you can visit here and do it a lot safer."

Bill Smith, a high school teacher at Southern Regional High School in Ocean County, New Jersey, said he canceled a research trip that was planned as part of his graduate degree from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

"This is the first summer in years that I have not traveled outside of the state," Smith said. "I have been more than happy to follow any and all guidelines that help protect the health and safety of those around me."

Pat Toben-Cropper, of Herndon, Virginia, is planning to drive her daughter, Kylie Cropper, back to college this month at the Institute of Art and Design at New England College in Manchester, New Hampshire. She said because of the travel advisories in the Northeast, she was unable to get a hotel reservation north of Pennsylvania.

"It became this logistical nightmare," she said.

But enforcing the rules can be challenging. In New Jersey, Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy said recently he can't bar people from traveling and hoped they would heed the quarantine advice. New York has been stopping some out-of-state travelers at checkpoints to ensure they are abiding by the quarantine—a move that has come under criticism.

Coronavirus hasn't devastated the homeless as many feared

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—When the coronavirus emerged in the U.S. this year, public health officials and advocates for the homeless feared the virus would rip through shelters and tent encampments, ravaging vulnerable people who often have chronic health issues.

They scrambled to move people into hotel rooms, thinned out crowded shelters and moved tents into designated spots at sanctioned outdoor camps.

While shelters saw some large COVID-19 outbreaks, the virus so far doesn't appear to have brought devastation to the homeless population as many feared. However, researchers and advocates say much is unknown about how the pandemic is affecting the estimated half-million people without housing in the U.S.

In a country that's surpassed 5 million identified cases and 169,000 deaths, researchers don't know why there appear to be so few outbreaks among the homeless.

"I am shocked, I guess I can say, because it's a very vulnerable population. I don't know what we're going to see in an aftermath," said Dr. Deborah Borne, who oversees health policy for COVID-19 homeless response at San Francisco's public health department. "That's why it's called a novel virus, because we don't know."

More than 200 of an estimated 8,000 homeless people in San Francisco have tested positive for the virus, and half came from an outbreak at a homeless shelter in April. One homeless person is among the city's 69 deaths.

In other places with large homeless populations, the numbers are similarly low. In King County, which includes Seattle, more than 400 of an estimated 12,000 homeless residents have been diagnosed. In Los Angeles County, more than 1,200 of an estimated 66,000 homeless people have been diagnosed.

It's slightly higher in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix, where nearly 500 of an estimated 7,400 homeless people have tested positive, including nine who died.

Health experts say the numbers don't indicate how widespread the disease is or how it might play out long term. It's unknown how many people have died of conditions indirectly related to the virus. While the coronavirus may dissipate more easily outdoors than indoors, living outside has its own risks.

Asia

South Koreans urged to stay home as cases jump

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea counted its fourth straight day of triple-digit increases in new coronavirus cases Monday as the government urged people to stay home and curb travel.

The government had drawn up a special holiday on Monday with hopes of spurring domestic consumption. But as infections in the capital region increase, Health Minister Park Neung-hoo urged people to stay home and for residents in Seoul and nearby Gyeonggi province to avoid visiting other parts of the country for two weeks.

The 197 new cases announced by South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention brought the nation's total to 15,515, including 305 deaths. The 279 new cases reported Sunday was South Korea's biggest single-day jump since early May amid concerns about an outbreak in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area.

The KCDC said 167 of the new cases came from the greater capital region, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live. Health workers have been struggling to track infections, but churches have emerged as a major source.

More than 300 have been linked to a northern Seoul church led by a conservative pastor who has frequently led anti-government protests against liberal President Moon Jae-in, including a rally attended by thousands of demonstrators in downtown Seoul on Saturday despite official pleas for them to stay home.

The government is pressing charges against the pastor, Jun Kwang-hun, for allegedly disrupting anti-virus efforts by falsely reporting the church's members and discouraging followers from getting tested. Health workers have so far tested 2,000 of the church's members and plan to test 2,000 more.

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

■ Japan's top automaker Toyota is seeing more cases among employees as coronavirus infections climb in Japan, partly because of a gradual increase in testing. Toyota Motor Corp. said Monday 20 employees were confirmed with COVID-19 so far, seven of them this month. The first cases were reported in March. Spokeswoman Kayo Doi said most have returned to work and none had been seriously ill. Toyota facilities are having office staff work from home, set up longer periods between shifts at plants and taken other social distancing measures. All plants are back up in Japan, although some production was temporarily halted. Japan's virus situation has been relatively moderate, but cases continue to rise. Japan said Monday 1,017 new cases were confirmed Sunday, and 11 deaths. The nation has had about 1,100 deaths from COVID-19.

■ Australia's hard-hit Victoria state on Monday recorded its deadliest day of the pandemic with 25 coronavirus fatalities. The death toll surpasses the previous 24-hour record of 21 set last week. Victoria's Health Department recorded 282 new cases, slightly more than 279 new infections on Sunday but maintaining a downward trend. "We just can't allow any sense of complacency to creep in here. This is an ultra-marathon and we just have to keep pushing forward each and every day," Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews said.

■ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has delayed New Zealand's elections due to the coronavirus outbreak in Auckland. They'll now be held on Oct. 17. The virus outbreak prompted a two-week lockdown in Auckland and halted election campaigning, and as of Monday, has infected 58 people. Health authorities believe all the cases are connected and there's no evidence of a wider outbreak. Authorities have been testing people at record levels since the outbreak was discovered last Tuesday.

New Zealand delays election after virus outbreak in Auckland

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has delayed New Zealand's elections by four weeks due to the coronavirus outbreak in Auckland.

The election had been scheduled for Sept. 19 but will now be held on Oct. 17. Opposition parties had sought a delay after the virus outbreak prompted the government last week to put Auckland under a two-week lockdown and halted election campaigning.

Before the latest outbreak, New Zealand had gone 102 days without any known community transmission of the virus, and life had returned to normal for most people, with restaurants and schools open and sports fans back in stadiums. The only known cases during that time were returning travelers who were quarantined at the border.

Officials believe the virus was reintroduced to New Zealand from abroad but haven't yet determined how. The outbreak in the nation's largest city has grown to 58 infections, all thought to be connected, giving health officials hope the virus isn't spreading beyond the cluster.

Ardern had the option of delaying the election for up to about two months. She said she had called the leaders of all the political parties represented in the parliament to get their views before making her decision Monday.

"Ultimately I want to ensure we have a well-run election that gives all voters the best chance to receive all the information they need about parties and candidates, and delivers certainty for the future," Ardern said.

She said she wouldn't consider delaying the election again—no matter what was happening with any virus outbreaks.

"COVID is continuing to disrupt life around the world," Ardern said. Other nations including South Korea and Singapore had nevertheless managed to hold elections during the pandemic, she added.

Ardern also announced that lawmakers would be called back to parliament, which had finished sitting ahead of the election. The parliament will now continue operating through early September.

Conservative opposition leader Judith Collins did not offer much of an opinion on the delay, saying only that her National Party "acknowledge the new date" while also saying there had been testing failures at the border.

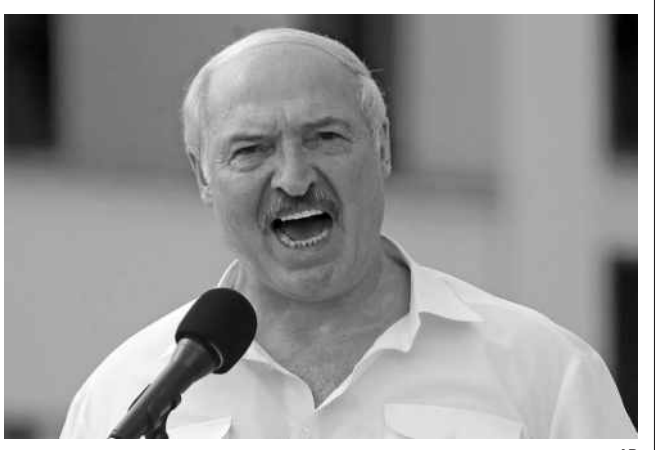
But the small opposition ACT party welcomed the delay. Leader David Seymour said the new outbreak had already forced him to cancel a dozen events, including debates and community meetings

"In order to have a free and fair election, candidates need to be out in the community listening to voters, and that's not possible while Aucklanders are housebound," he said in a statement.

World

Belarus president rejects calls to repeating presidential vote

MINSK, Belarus (AP)—The embattled president of Belarus tried to put on a show of strength Sunday, holding a rally with tens of thousands of supporters and rejecting any possibility of repeating the vote that gave him a sixth term. But opponents countered with a far larger demonstration that attracted as many as 200,000 people.



AP

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko addresses his supporters gathered at Independent Square of Minsk, Belarus, Sunday, Aug. 16, 2020.

Alexander Lukashenko, who has ruled the former Soviet republic of 9.5 million since 1994, lashed out at the West and declared to his crowd that the country would "perish as a state" if the election were rerun.

About 50,000 people listened to Lukashenko in a square near the main government building in the capital of Minsk. But as he spoke, throngs of supporters streamed to their own rally about 2.5 kilometers (1.5 miles) away. It was the eighth straight day of anti-government demonstrations.

During 26 years in office, Lukashenko has repressed opposition figures and independent news media. But this year, protesters fed up with the country's declining living standards and Lukashenko's dismissal of the coronavirus pandemic have posed the biggest challenge to his rule.

The 65-year-old president claimed Sunday that Western powers were gathering military units in countries along Belarus' western borders and denounced suggestions by some Western nations that Belarus should repeat the Aug. 9 presidential vote, which opposition supporters say gave Lukashenko a victory only through massive fraud. Official results say he received 80% of the vote.

"If we follow their lead (and rerun the election), we will perish as a state," Lukashenko declared, a day after saying he and Russian President Vladimir Putin had agreed that Russia would send unspecified security assistance to the former Soviet republic if Lukashenko asked for it.

NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu dismissed the president's claim about troops gathering, tweeting that there is no NATO buildup in the region.

"NATO's multinational presence in the eastern part of the Alliance is not a threat to any country," Lungescu said. "It's strictly defensive, proportionate & designed to prevent conflict & preserve peace."

The Collective Treaty Security Organization, a military alliance of six former Soviet states including Belarus, said Sunday it would make a decision about providing assistance if Belarus requested it.

Netanyahu say UAE deal signals end to 'land for peace'

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that a deal to establish full diplomatic ties with the United Arab Emirates proves that Israel doesn't need to retreat from occupied land sought by the Palestinians in order to achieve peace and normalization with Arab states.

Israel and the UAE announced Thursday they were establishing full diplomatic relations in a U.S.-brokered deal that required Israel to halt its contentious plan to annex occupied West Bank land sought by the Palestinians. Netanyahu has insisted the annexation plans are only on "temporary hold" at the request of the United States.

The UAE, like most of the Arab world, long rejected official diplomatic ties with Israel, saying recognition should only come in return for concessions in peace talks. Its accord with Israel breaks that long-held tenet and could usher in agreements with other Arab states, undermining an Arab consensus that was a rare source of leverage for the Palestinians.

"According to the Palestinians, and to many others in the world who agreed with them, peace can't be reached without conceding to the Palestinians' demands, including uprooting settlements, dividing Jerusalem and withdrawal to 1967 lines," Netanyahu said in a video statement. "No more. This concept of 'peace through withdrawal and weakness' has passed from the world."

The Palestinians want the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip for their hoped-for state, and peacemaking with them since the 1990s has been based on withdrawal from those lands to make way for a Palestinian homeland. Israel captured the territories in the 1967 Mideast war, although it withdrew its troops and settlers from Gaza in 2005.

But what has been a wall of Arab support for the Palestinians and their demands has begun to crack in recent years, in large part because of the shared enmity of Israel and other Arab states toward Iran and Iranian proxies in the region.

The Palestinians bristled at Netanyahu's remarks.

"Peace should be established on the basis of the Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital. This is the Arab and international consensus and anything else has no value," said Nabil Abu Rdeneh, a spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Netanyahu also reiterated Sunday his interpretation of the UAE deal: that annexation was only being suspended and that it was still on the table, so long as it was done in coordination with Washington. UAE officials have indicated that the deal means annexation has been shelved entirely.

Overdrive

AUTOREVIEW: 2021 Chevrolet Tahoe SUV sets standard for big SUVs

By MARK PHELAN
DETROIT FREE PRESS

The 2021 Chevrolet Tahoe. (MARK PHELAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS/TNS)

DETROIT—Big vehicles don't make me nervous. I grew up with them. My father, an engineer, drove a succession of pickups through fields and forests developing agricultural and construction equipment. My mother, 5 feet, 4 inches in heels, was decades ahead of auto industry trends, driving a Suburban—always calling it her car, never "the truck"—because of its commanding view of the road.

The Michigan State University School of Journalism asked me to chauffeur visiting editors around campus because I wasn't afraid to drive a 15-passenger Econoline van in a parking structure.

So believe me when I say the 2021 Chevrolet Tahoe is big.

Big enough to maintain social distance from the front seats to its newly comfortable third row of seats—more than 6 feet away, by a tape measure stretched nose to nose.

The 2021 Tahoe is 6.7 inches longer than the outgoing model, but size is the tip of the iceberg. Most of the new SUV's improvements are below the surface, including an independent rear suspension that improves ride, and, more important, transforms the third row of seats from an automotive penalty box into a premium perch my passengers wouldn't vacate even after we measured.

The Tahoe—and its even bigger brother, the Suburban—rules the mass-market big SUV market, accounting for nearly 50% of the lucrative segment's sales. Add the upcoming GMC Yukon, and General Motors dominates the segment at around 70%.

It's also terrific, establishing itself as the big SUV to beat.

The 2021 Tahoe is arriving in dealerships now.

Driving impressions

I spent a day driving a loaded four-wheel drive 2021 Tahoe High Country on highways, city streets and country roads. The independent rear suspension provides a remarkably smooth ride. Nicely tuned steering made the massive SUV easy to maneuver.

My top-of-the-line model had an adaptive air suspension and 22-inch alloy wheels. It devoured speed bumps like breakfast burritos and was quiet at highway speed.

The 2021 Chevrolet Tahoe's optional 6.2L V8 engine generates 420 horsepower and 460 pound-feet of torque.

It was easy to conduct conversations, even with third-row passengers pretending to be in a limo. The comfortable second row captain's seats make nice foot rests when folded flat, incidentally. They also slide fore and aft and tip for rear seat access. Power running boards and adjustable ride height contribute to easy ingress and egress.

The base engine is a 355-horsepower 5.3L V8, but my car had the optional 420-hp 6.2L. I had plenty of power for acceleration and cruising.

A smooth, quick 10-speed automatic transmission is standard. The Tahoe uses new shift controls built into the dash at driver's 2 o'clock. Pull-toggles control the commands that set you in motion—reverse and drive—while you press buttons for park and neutral. It's a layout that will probably be second nature in a few days. A rocker switch beneath those controls lets you shift up and down for trailering, hills, etc.

At 14 mpg in the city, 19 on the highway and 16 combined, EPA fuel economy estimates for my 6.2L 4WD High Country trail its direct competitor, a Ford Expedition with a less powerful 375-hp twin-turbo V6. GM recommends premium gasoline for spec-sheet power and fuel economy, while Ford's EcoBoost V6 generates its figures with less expensive regular.

Maximum Tahoe towing capacity is 8,400 pounds. My 4WD 6.2L was rated at 8,100. Those ratings use SAE standards, but I didn't have a chance to tow during my test.

Available safety features

- Automatic front and rear braking
- Collision alert
- Pedestrian alert
- Lane Change alert and assist
- Blind spot and cross traffic alert
- Parking assist
- Automatic high beams
- Safety alert driver seat

How much?

Tahoe prices start at $49,000 for a rear-drive 5.3L model. Adding 4WD raises the tab to $52,000.

Chevy builds a wide range of models: Six trim levels, three engines and rear- or four-wheel drive. I tested a top of the line High Country. That model starts at $69,600 for RWD, $72,600 4WD.

I tested a top of the line 4WD High Country. It stickered at $80,550.

Tahoe prices compare favorably to the Ford Expedition, its only serious competition.

All prices exclude destination charges.

Features on my vehicle included:

- Adaptive cruise control
- Twin rear-seat video/touch screens
- 10-speaker Bose audio
- Head-up display
- 10.2-inch touch screen
- Navigation
- Voice recognition and Bluetooth
- Apple CarPlay
- —Android Auto
- Wireless charging
- Wireless CarPlay and Android auto
- —22-inch silver painted wheels
- Hill descent control
- Trailering kit
- Two-speed transfer case
- Adaptive air suspension
- Panoramic sun roof
- Power running boards
- Sliding center console
- Surround view cameras
- Digital rearview mirror
- Trailer hitch guidance

For $80G, I'd expect real wood

The Tahoe High Country's interior sets a new standard for Chevy trucks, with leather seats, soft materials everywhere you're likely to lean or touch and industry-leading controls and connectivity.

Climate, audio and navigation controls are refreshingly easy to use, with a combination of voice recognition, 10.2-inch touch screen, and most important, buttons and dials for frequently used audio and climate settings.

You might ask what more a person could ask for, if you'd never been in Ford Expedition King Ranch or Platinum, or even a Ram Laramie Longhorn pickup. They have unexpected design flourishes, like the Ram's hand-branded wood trim and saddle bag-style map pockets.

In that context, the Tahoe's faux wood trim seems like a glaring omission, undermining the interior's virtues: space, comfort and generally attractive and appealing materials.

The Tahoe's interior does have plenty of appealing features, including a panoramic sun roof and a motorized storage bin in the center console that slides back for access by second-row passengers.

GM's safety alert seats are among the auto industry's best features, vibrating the driver seat's front or side cushions in response to obstacles and oncoming vehicles. It may sound distracting, but quickly becomes second nature. I prefer it to alerts that beep or flash lights.

NUTS & BOLTS

2020 Chevrolet Tahoe at a glance

- Base price: $49,000
- Tahoe High Country 4WD as tested: $80,550 (excluding destination charges)
- Four-wheel-drive six- to nine-passenger SUV.
- Engine: 6.2L V6
- Output: 420 hp @ 5,600 rpm; 460 pound-feet of torque @ 4,100
- Transmission: 10-speed automatic
- EPA: 14 mpg city/19 highway/16 combined
- Wheelbase: 120.9 inches
- Length: 210.7 inches
- Width: 81 inches
- Height: 75.9 inches
- Curb weight: 5,845 pounds
- Assembled in Arlington, Texas.

Motormouth: How to get spattered paint off car

Q: I hit a new traffic paint line and got a boatload of paint under my wheel wells, not just spatter but a lot caked on about 1/8 inch thick, besides some spatter. I tried Goof Off paint remover and regular paint and varnish remover for wood and plastics. Neither one did anything. Any ideas?

A: You didn't just hit it, you drove a mile on that line. The easiest solution is to spray the fender liners in the wheel wells with black paint. To remove paint from body panels, a professional bodyshop tech we interviewed suggested soaking with automotive adhesive remover (available at most parts stores) to soften the paint. Be patient. Scrape the paint off using with a plastic tool like the kind used to apply body putty. I use plastic razor blades for stuff like this.

Q: I am looking forward to getting a new car. My hearing bothers me, so I have been searching on the internet for reports of the decibel level inside the cabins of SUVs. In particular, I am interested in the Mercedes GLC, Audi Q5, Honda CRV Touring and the Buick Envision. So far, no luck. Is there a way to find the cabin decibel levels to find the quietest vehicle?

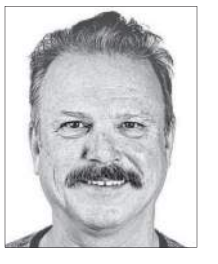
A: To measure sound pressure, you need a decibel meter. What is a decibel: According to the Hearing Health Foundation, a decibel (dB) is a unit of measurement for sound. A-weighted decibels, abbreviated dBA, are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by our ears. You can spend anywhere from $20 on up for a meter, but that seems foolish if you only need it once. I suggest downloading a free app to your smartphone and test driving the cars.

Q: A number of years ago, the key for my Merc Marquis' factory wheel locks went missing. Called the dealer's parts counter who gave me a contact at the lock's customer service. They required a sharp close-up emailed pic of the lug lock plus $35 for a matching socket and it was a done deal. Hope this helps your readers.

A: Good advice. Thank you.

Q: A shut-in senior friend for whom I've been doing errands for years at no cost to her (except for out-of-pocket expenses, including automotive ones), has complained that I am cheating her when I started to contend that automotive expenses really include more than gas. When I explained that such expenses include not only regular oil changes and other routine liquid checks, but also front end suspension spring replacements and undercarriage body work so that the car doesn't collapse from rusting through (not to mention air conditioning and heating, both of which died years ago, plus a badly needed new/used set of tires) she has balked. Can you advise very approximately how much is a realistic estimate of the true cost of operating my car on a per mile basis?

A: I use my car for business and have always ascribed to the Internal Revenue Service (yes, that IRS) allowance. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2020, the standard mileage rate is 57.5 cents per mile for business miles driven (down from 58 cents in 2019). This accounts for fuel, maintenance, insurance, wear and tear, and so on.



By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Life & Style

Elizabeth Debicki
to play Princess Diana on 'The Crown'

NEW YORK (AP)—"The Crown" has found its Princess Diana.

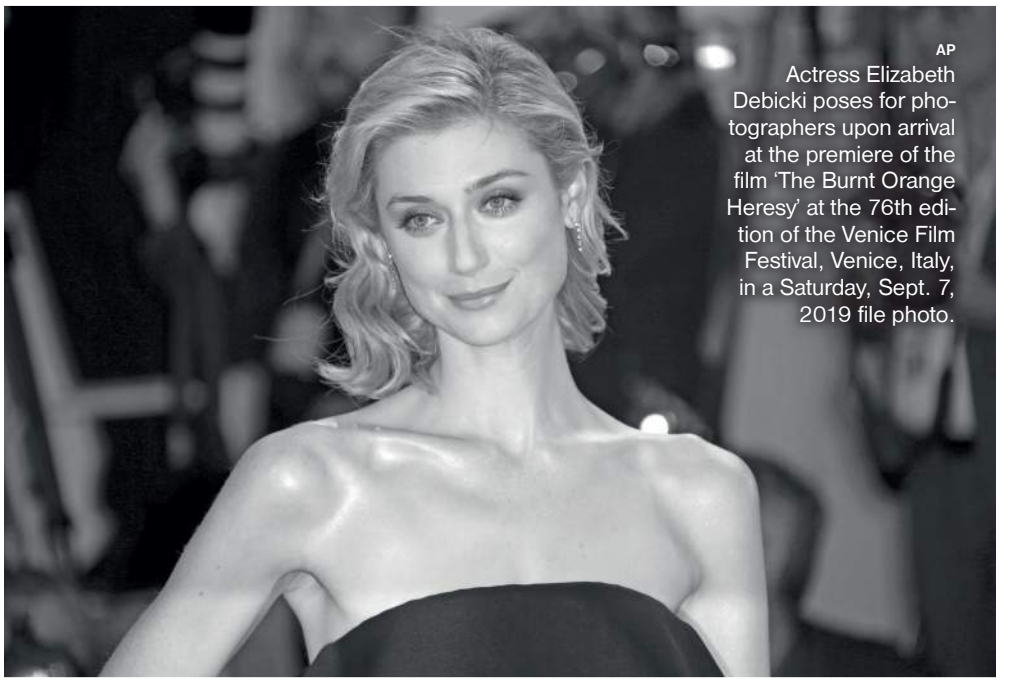
Elizabeth Debicki will play the Princess of Wales in seasons five and six of "The Crown," the Netflix series announced Sunday.

Debicki will join a new cast for the series that includes Imelda Staunton as Queen Elizabeth, Lesley Manville as Princess Margaret and Jonathan Pryce as Prince Philip. Staunton succeeds Olivia Colman and Claire Foy in the role.

Emma Corrin is playing Diana on the drama's upcoming fourth season, but Debicki will take on the part for what's sure to be the character's most dramatic chapters. Seasons five and six are expected to be the show's final seasons. No premiere date of season four has yet been announced.

"Princess Diana's spirit, her words and her actions live in the hearts of so many," Debicki said on Twitter. "It is my true privilege and honor to be joining this masterful series, which has had me absolutely hooked from episode one."

Debicki, a 29-year-old Australian actress, is seen as a rising star after a breakout performance in Steve McQueen's "Widows." She also stars in Christopher Nolan's upcoming thriller "Tenet." Other credits include "The Great Gatsby," "The Burnt Orange Heresy" and "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2."



AP
Actress Elizabeth Debicki poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'The Burnt Orange Heresy' at the 76th edition of the Venice Film Festival, Venice, Italy, in a Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 file photo.

Prince Harry, Meghan Markle move into new California home

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Prince Harry and Meghan Markle have moved into a new family home, a representative for the couple said Thursday without providing its location or other details.

Real estate agents and tax records point to a seven-acre estate in Santa Barbara County, according to The Los Angeles Times.

"The Duke and Duchess of Sussex moved into their family home in July of this year," a statement from the couple's spokesperson said. "They have settled into the quiet privacy of their community since their arrival."

The statement added that the couple hopes such privacy will be respected on behalf of their family as well as their neighbors.

Area real estate agents believe the couple bought a $14.65-million estate, which closed in an off-market sale in June, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday. The newspaper said it obtained tax records for the property in the heart of the coastal community of Montecito that match limited liability companies previously created by the Duchess of Sussex.

Montecito has a number of celebrity residents, including Oprah Winfrey and Ellen DeGeneres.

Built in 2003, the sprawling estate is hedged and gated from the street, according to the newspaper. The roughly 14,500-square-foot (1,350-square meter) main house has nine bedrooms, a billiards/game room, a home theater, spa facilities, an elevator and a gym.

The estate also includes a two-bedroom guesthouse, a teahouse, a tennis court and a swimming pool.

Cohen's book foreword: Trump 'wouldn't mind if I was dead'

NEW YORK (AP)—Michael Cohen's memoir about President Donald Trump will be released Sept. 8 by Skyhorse Publishing, which confirmed the news Thursday to The Associated Press. The book is called "Disloyal: The True Story of the Former Personal Attorney to President Donald J. Trump."

"'Disloyal' is the most devastating business and political horror story of the century," according to a Skyhorse statement shared with the AP. "It is a story that you haven't read in newspapers, or on social media, or watched on television. These are accounts that only someone who worked for Trump around the clock for a decade—not a few months or even a couple of years—could know."

Earlier in the day, Cohen had released the book's foreword, writing of his estranged former boss, "He wouldn't mind if I was dead." He did not list a publisher for the book and, as of midday Thursday, it was not listed on Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble.com.

Cohen is completing the last two years of a three-year prison sentence at home after pleading guilty to campaign finance charges and lying to Congress. He was released from prison in May amid coronavirus fears, only to be returned in July after making it known that he planned to publish "Disloyal." The U.S. government dropped its effort to silence Cohen late last month after an agreement was reached between government lawyers and Cohen attorney Danya Perry that lifted a ban on Cohen speaking publicly.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

More than 700 fans expected to attend pared-down Elvis vigil

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — More than 700 fans of Elvis Presley have reserved spots to attend the candlelight vigil marking the anniversary of rock 'n' roll icon's death in Memphis, Tennessee, in a event pared down because of the coronavirus outbreak. Every year in mid-August, thousands of Presley devotees from around the world descend on the Graceland tourist attraction to remember the late singer and actor on the anniversary of his death. Fans carry candles as they walk past his grave at the mansion where he died on Aug. 16, 1977. This year, Elvis Presley's Graceland has limited the number of people who will be allowed to attend the vigil in person, in observance of safety precautions and social distancing protocols brought about by the coronavirus outbreak.

Sentencing date set for NY self-help guru in sex slave case

NEW YORK (AP) — The leader of a cult-like self-improvement group in upstate New York who was convicted last year on charges that he turned some of his followers into sex slaves will face sentencing on Oct. 27, a judge said Friday. In a conference call, U.S. District Judge Nicholas Garaufis told lawyers for Keith Raniere he was making arrangements for the jailed Raniere to be sentenced in person at a federal court in Brooklyn and for his victims to speak to the court if they want. "We need to figure out how to configure the courtroom to make sure everyone is safe" in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, the judge said.

Man pines for wife who left without giving an explanation

DEAR ABBY: My wife left me a little over two years ago, and I can't seem to get over it. All she said was that we had an "emotional disconnect." I don't believe she was unfaithful.

All I can think about is being with her, and I cringe if I think about her being with someone else. I'm a professional with a good career and pension, and I have been approached by some nice women who would like to date. How can I get over my feelings for my ex?

LONELY IN THE PLAINS

DEAR LONELY: Have you been getting out and participating in leisure activities since your wife left? That would be one way to get your mind off her because sitting around thinking about her is counterproductive.

Your ex should have been more specific about why she left. Understanding would have helped you start to really heal. Because it has been two years and you haven't been able to work this out, please talk with a licensed psychotherapist. Your physician or your health insurance provider can give you the names of qualified professionals. Please don't wait to ask.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter just informed me that she will be hanging a deer head in their living room. Her live-in boyfriend loves to hunt, and she is doing this for him. Just thinking about it makes me physically ill. My thoughts turn to a dying animal who is suffering.

My husband and I gave my daughter $12,000 to buy this home. I want her to rethink her decision based on the fact that this disturbs me, not that I'm trying to push her around because we gave her this money. I know she will take it personally and be upset at me. Help!

UNEASY IN OREGON

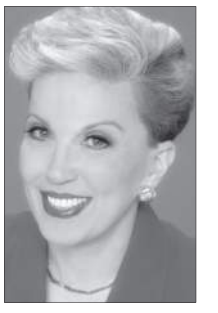
DEAR UNEASY: I think we both know your daughter is an adult and entitled to make that decision without worrying that her fella's hobby bothers you. We don't have to like it or approve. Because what's upsetting you is the idea that the deer suffered, ask your daughter (or him) how many shots it took to take the creature down. If it was more than one, you might be happier entertaining them in your home.

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I retired five years ago. I have adequate savings and an excellent pension for us to live comfortably.

I took up a hobby three years ago that generates about $5,000 in annual income, which I put aside in a separate bank account. My wife asked, "What are you saving that money for?" I said, "Maybe a classic car, helping with a family reunion (on my side)", etc. She responded, "We need to be on the same page about how it gets spent because half of it is mine."

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

When I reached out to my son for his insight, he sided with her because (legally) half of what I have is hers. I have no problem consulting with her on a major expenditure coming out of our other savings, but on this one I feel she is controlling and petty. Your thoughts?

HOBBY IN CALIFORNIA

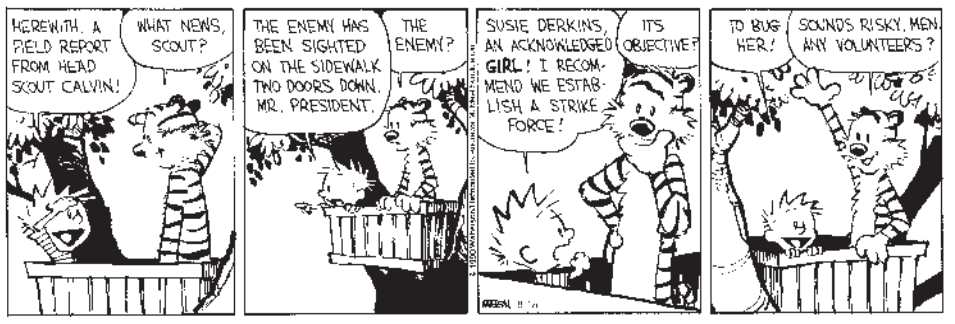
DEAR HOBBY: I agree with you. Not only that, but she also lacks tact.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

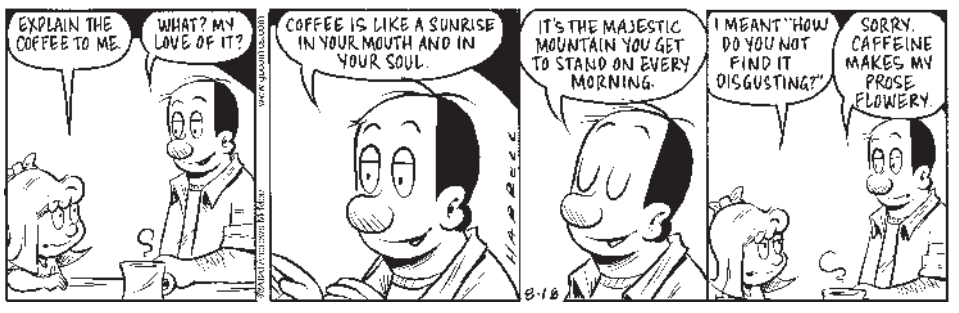

HEREWITH, A FIELD REPORT FROM HEAD SCOUT CALVIN!
WHAT NEWS, SCOUT?
THE ENEMY HAS BEEN SIGHTED ON THE SIDEWALK TWO DOORS DOWN, MR. PRESIDENT.
THE ENEMY?
SUSIE DERKINS, AN ACKNOWLEDGED GIRL! I RECOMMEND WE ESTABLISH A STRIKE FORCE!
IT'S OBJECTIVE?
TO BUG HER!
SOUNDS RISKY, MEN. ANY VOLUNTEERS?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

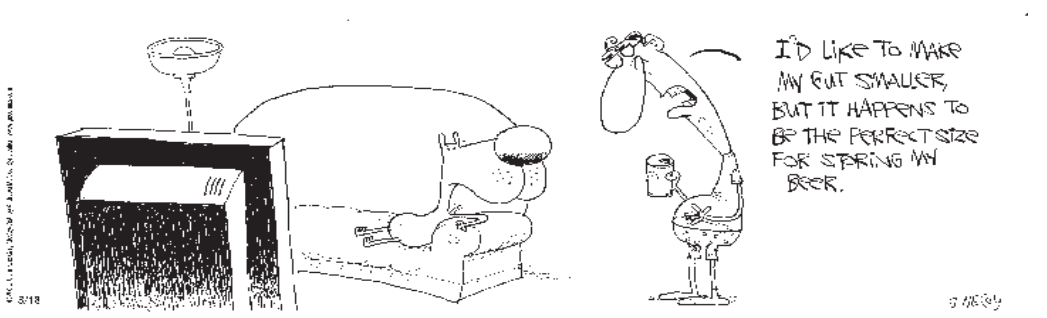
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


EXPLAIN THE COFFEE TO ME.
WHAT? MY LOVE OF IT?
COFFEE IS LIKE A SUNRISE IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR SOUL.
IT'S THE MAJESTIC MOUNTAIN YOU GET TO STAND ON EVERY MORNING.
I MEANT "HOW DO YOU NOT FIND IT DISGUSTING?"
SORRY. CAFFEINE MAKES MY PROSE FLOWERY.
8-18

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Thick chunk
5 Artist Chagall
9 Gear tooth
12 Norway's capital
13 Latin love
14 Carnival city
15 Call attention to
17 Equal (Pref.)
18 Scratched (out)
19 Saw
21 Sculptor Henry
24 "Rent" role
25 — facto
26 Upright
30 In shape
31 LP players
32 Rink surface
33 Agitates
35 Old Testament book
36 Swiss river
37 Look of disdain
38 Chocolate source
40 "A Doll's House" heroine
42 Japanese sash
43 Highlight in print
48 Actress Taylor
49 Super-hero's garment
50 Pairs
51 Packed away
52 Male deer
53 Chimney buildup

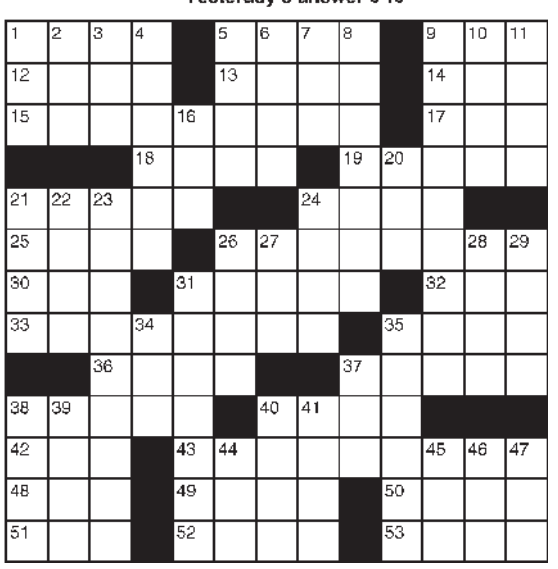
DOWN

1 Soak (up)
2 Baton Rouge sch.
3 Cleric's garment
4 Ravel composition
5 Nutmeg spice
6 During
7 Cartoonist Chast
8 After-movie listings
9 Find fault with
10 French river
11 Suitable
16 Mamie's man
20 "— dreaming?"
21 Offend
22 Mayberry moppet
23 Shun
24 Hosp. scans
26 Tarzan's transport
27 Newt
28 Farm fraction
29 Tragic king
31 Brave deeds
34 Goat's cry
35 Puts into law
37 Lanka lead-in
38 Pop choice
39 Slightly
40 Wine valley
41 Couturier Cassini
44 Body art, for short
45 — Jima
46 Menagerie
47 Ballpark fig.

Solution time: 22 mins.

O	R	B	S	■	C	R	J	■	N	A	S	A
T	I	R	A	M	I	S	U	■	C	R	E	S
C	O	O	L	C	A	T	S	■	M	C	T	H
■	■	■	L	I	Z	■	T	R	A	S	H	Y
I	I	A	N	O	I	■	G	D	A	Y	■	■
A	_	A	W	■	T	O	O	C	C	O	L	■
H	E	N	■	A	R	N	I	E	■	M	I	A
■	C	O	O	L	A	N	T	■	C	A	L	M
■	■	■	A	S	I	A	■	M	I	N	I	Y
L	A	P	T	O	P	■	F	A	R	■	■	■
A	B	L	E	■	S	T	A	Y	C	O	O	L
I	B	A	R	■	E	S	C	A	L	A	T	E
R	A	Y	S	■	S	A	T	■	C	R	S	C

Yesterday's answer 8-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Madelaine Petsch, 26; Andy Samberg, 42; Edward Norton, 51; Robert Redford, 84.

Happy Birthday: Expand your mind, interests and spiritual awareness this year. Personal growth will encourage you to envision life from a different perspective. Don't buy into the changes others make. Create what you want to happen in your life. It's up to you to soothe your soul and live life your way. Set goals, and pick up the knowledge and the skills to reach your destination. Your numbers are 7, 12, 19, 22, 26, 35, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* It's up to you to finish what you start. Put your energy to good use, and take care of business before moving on to the things you'd prefer to pursue. Too much of anything will end up dragging you down. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Take care of yourself. Fitness, exercise, diet, rest and anything else that eases stress and makes your life better are encouraged. A healthy attitude will promote a better and brighter lifestyle. Personal gain is within reach. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Sit tight, take care of personal and domestic matters, make adjustments to the way you live and do your best to avoid anyone who likes to disrupt your life. Don't share secrets or gossip. Concentrate on making positive changes at home. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Reach out to someone you enjoy working with, and an opportunity to do something unique will arise. Before you make a decision, confront issues that may become a problem before you begin. Personal improvement and growth are favored. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Pick up the pace, and focus on whatever will help you accomplish what you set out to do. Change is about following your heart, not someone else's. Put your heart into whatever you feel passionate about, and you'll achieve peace of mind. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Be creative when dealing with changes you are facing or want to pursue. Taking a different approach will alter your perspective regarding how you feel about someone close to you. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take the initiative and do something that will help your community or family. Getting angry will not solve problems, making reasonable suggestions will. Don't take a risk when it comes to your health; proceed with safety measures in place. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Do what you can, and stop wasting time trying to achieve the impossible. Look for an alternative way to use your talents that will also improve your lifestyle as well as your relationship with the people you deal with daily. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Concentrate on what's important to you. There is money to be made if you market your skills, knowledge and experience to fit the current economic trends. Don't sit back when you have so much to offer. A contract looks promising. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Thrive on change, but don't go overboard. Know what you want, and focus on what's important. Make your home environment welcoming, and it will help keep you and those you love and live with safe, happy and emotionally sound. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't be a follower or fold under pressure. Consider what's best for you and the people you love. Don't let temptation or uncertainty created by an outsider's influence overrule what is in your best interest. Be reasonable, respond intelligently and proceed with your plans. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Look for innovative ways to help those in need without yielding to unsafe situations. A positive change in your personal life will make your life easier. Share your intentions with someone you love, and make romance a priority. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are passionate, rambunctious and generous. You are ambitious and impressive.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

8			4	1				6
	6		3		8		1	
					5			
	2	1					5	7
9				4				8
3	5					2	4	
			1					
	9		7		4		8	
7				2	6			5

Difficulty Level ★★ 8/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

1	6	3	2	9	5	8	7	4
2	5	9	7	8	4	6	3	1
7	8	4	6	1	3	5	9	2
8	2	6	4	3	9	7	1	5
4	3	1	5	7	2	9	8	6
9	7	5	8	6	1	4	2	3
5	1	7	3	4	8	2	6	9
6	9	2	1	5	7	3	4	8
3	4	8	9	2	6	1	5	7

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

LYSOL DISINFECTS Solution: 5 letters

L	E	S	D	N	A	H	A	R	D	E	Y	W	S	S
A	A	S	E	K	A	T	F	O	S	A	S	R	I	U
G	S	U	N	N	A	P	O	U	R	P	A	P	S	R
A	A	I	D	A	O	O	O	P	M	C	E	A	S	F
I	F	L	N	I	E	H	Ⓢ	U	O	S	G	B	E	A
N	E	O	L	K	S	L	P	Ⓝ	O	E	E	E	T	C
S	S	N	E	O	S	E	C	P	Ⓐ	N	N	N	A	E
T	T	A	M	E	N	E	R	I	E	Ⓒ	H	C	N	Z
L	E	H	O	S	N	U	R	I	N	S	E	K	I	I
A	L	T	N	T	P	E	G	W	E	D	L	I	M	T
C	I	E	R	I	T	Y	F	U	N	G	I	S	I	I
I	O	A	T	C	H	L	O	R	I	D	E	E	L	N
D	T	L	A	U	N	D	R	Y	S	T	O	R	E	A
E	U	B	E	N	Z	A	L	K	O	N	I	U	M	S
M	C	L	E	A	N	E	R	E	C	K	I	T	T	S

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Against, Bacteria, Benckiser, Benzalkonium, Cans, Cars, Chloride, Cleaner, Cleanse, Concentrate, Eliminates, Ethanol, Fink, Fungi, Gallon, Germs, Handles, Hands, Hard, House, Hygiene, Laundry, Lehn, Lemon, Medical, Mildew, Multipurpose, Phones, Pour, Pumps, Reckitt, Residual, Rinse, Sanitize, Sinks, Soak, Soft, Spray, Store, Surface, Toilets, Usage

Yesterday's Answer: Concert

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 60 order online at: www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Lakers face stiff test against Lillard, Blazers

FLORIDA (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers' path to a 17th championship looks awfully perilous from the outset, and not just because the Western Conference's top seeds have struggled in the bubble.

Damian Lillard by himself is enough to make any team worry about its postseason prospects, yet the bubble MVP is just one challenge looming before the Lakers.

The Lakers' dubious reward for perseverance in an extraordinarily challenging and particularly tragic season is no prize at all: They must begin their quest against the streaking Trail Blazers and Lillard, who has lit up the Lakers and just about everybody else for years.

"Definitely not your typical eighth seed," first-year Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. "They played at an elite level during this stretch in the bubble, at least offensively."

What's more, the Lakers have only a nominal home-court advantage when the first-round series begins Tuesday. They'll play in the near-silent bubble instead of a sold-out Staples Center cheering this beloved franchise's first playoff appearance since 2013.

After going 3-5 in the bubble with unusually poor play by their normally sturdy defense, not much looks certain for the Lakers—except the leadership of LeBron James, who has already done just about everything possible in the NBA postseason.

Even if their fans must watch from afar, the Lakers still ended their streak of six straight non-playoff seasons—an unprecedented embarrassment for the NBA's glamour franchise.

Everything changed when Anthony Davis agreed to join LA from New Orleans last summer, and the Lakers spent the year quickly building a cohesive team that could handle the rigors of a postseason run.

Lillard presented an entirely different set of challenges, particularly in the confines of a seven-game series.

"He's balling right now," Davis said. "He's hot. He's doing whatever he can do to make his team win. He's carrying the load, playing a ton of minutes. He's the head of the snake for their team, and you've got to do your best to contain him, take away some of his tendencies, but they also have other guys to make plays as well. They're a tough opponent, but everybody knows that level he's on and his mindset."

Portland had to win the first play-in postseason NBA game since 1956 to reach this spot, beating Memphis 126-122 on Saturday. The Blazers finished with the West's eighth-best record by surging past the Grizzlies and going 7-2 after the league restarted in the bubble to make the playoffs for the seventh consecutive season.

Lillard has been a particular problem for the Lakers ever since 2012, when he put up 23 points and 11 assists in his NBA debut. More recently, Lillard had 48 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds at Staples Center on Feb. 1 while steamrolling the current Lakers in their first game after Kobe Bryant's death.

Lillard realizes plenty of observers believe the Blazers have a good shot to knock off the Lakers.

"But the Lakers, they're the No. 1 seed in the West for a reason," Lillard said. "They've got the best player in the world on their team. But at the same time, we didn't fight as hard as we fought in the bubble to just hang on with the eighth seed and go out here and get beat up on. We feel like we have a chance in a series against anybody in his league. We're going to approach it with a healthy level of respect for them."

Blazers coach Terry Stotts said there was relief in taking care of the Grizzlies in one game for that extra day of rest. Had Portland lost, they'd have to face Memphis again on Sunday.

"It was on everybody's mind, particularly Dame and CJ (McCollum)," Stotts said. "We knew that Memphis was going to be desperate team. But I think we had the same desperation because of how important having Sunday off was. Playing a back-to-back with one day of rest and getting ready for the Lakers, (that) would've been a tough task."

McCollum has struggled in the bubble with a back injury that was revealed to be a fracture on Saturday, but he was key for the Blazers on Saturday, scoring 14 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter.

He said it was his shark mentality.

"I always said that I was a shark," McCollum said. "You've got to be a killer no matter what the circumstances are. Always told people `Don't worry about me, I'm gonna figure out how to eat,' and that's what I've always done. I figured how to eat and I figured out how to provide. That's the type of mentality you've got to have, because if you don't kill, you will be killed out here. You will be destroyed—figuratively, obviously—and you will be going home to pack your bags."

Blazers center Jusuf Nurkic announced shortly before Saturday's game that his beloved grandmother had passed away after a lengthy battle with COVID-19.

"She made me play, I guess," Nurkic said. "Personally, I thought I wasn't going to play tonight. I didn't want to shoot any balls during warmups."

AP

In this Jan. 31, 2020 file photo, Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, right, drives against Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis during the first half of an NBA game in Los Angeles.

NBA's best time of year is here

FLORIDA (AP)—There seem to be fewer players fishing at Walt Disney World these days. Getting a tee time or streaming video games might not be as much of a priority as it was a few weeks ago, either.

Summer vacation is over.

The restart gets real now.

The NBA playoffs start Monday, the beginning of a two-month journey to see which team will be able to say it won a championship. It would come in the most unusual, most trying season the league has ever seen because of a shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic and 22 teams eventually moving into a so-called bubble at the Disney complex in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, to salvage the season.

"This is why we got here, why we worked so hard, why everyone put their egos aside and put their effort into this, so we could get to that point where we could crown a champion," said guard Kyle Lowry of the defending champion Toronto Raptors. "The best part of the NBA season is the playoffs."

The Raptors are back, with realistic aspirations to repeat their title. The Eastern Conference field also includes the Milwaukee Bucks, who posted the best regular-season record for the second consecutive year and have a likely back-to-back MVP in Giannis Antetokounmpo.

In the Western Conference, for the first time since 2015, the Golden State Warriors won't be going to the NBA Finals—their gap year, so to speak, meant they fell to the bottom of the West as they look to reset with a healthy Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson next season, possibly with the No. 1 overall draft pick as well.

LeBron James is back in the playoffs, after taking the Los Angeles Lakers—who couldn't get to the postseason in his injury-marred first year in Hollywood—to the best record in the West. He's gone to the NBA Finals in each of his last eight postseason trips; four with Miami, then four more with Cleveland.

"We've been through a lot this year," Lakers coach Frank Vogel told reporters last week. "But really, all of it is just a buildup to us ... going into the playoffs. So we're here, we're excited about it and confident in what we can accomplish."

The matchups: Milwaukee-Orlando, Toronto-Brooklyn, Boston-Philadelphia and Indiana-Miami in the East, with the Lakers against play-in game winner Portland, the Los Angeles Clippers against Dallas, Denver-Utah and Houston-Oklahoma City.

Some of those clubs can say they are happy to be in the postseason. For others, only a title will do.

"I didn't mention that we secured the 2 seed," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said. "I don't think anybody in the locker room talked about it. We really don't care. Like, we want to win it all. ... That's the only thing that matters right now for us."

Teams have been in the bubble for nearly six weeks now, first for a couple weeks of training camp, then three scrimmages followed by eight seeding games that were critical to some clubs and little more than tuneups to others.

The vibe was different in the opening days of bubble life. Bass fishing on the Disney campus was all the rage, more than a few players tried golf for the first time -- a group from one team, perhaps not yet fully versed in golf etiquette, tried to play with nine people, compared with the typical max of four—and everything from poker tabletops to wine fridges were being shipped in to help players pass the time.

Some gamers have put down their controls for the next few weeks; Miami's Meyers Leonard, generally considered the best Call of Duty player in the NBA, announced that he needs a break to focus on the playoffs.

"For now, it's time to lock in and help my team win a championship," Leonard said.

There's no travel in these playoffs, obviously. It'll be 16 teams, with games limited to two arenas at Disney. For the first round, it'll be four games per day at each site, meaning drama will begin in the early afternoon and continue until late in the evening.

Yanks take 9th straight win over Red Sox

AP

New York Yankees Aaron Hicks, left, connects for a second-inning, RBI double in a baseball game against the Boston Red Sox, Sunday, Aug. 16, 2020, in New York. Red Sox catcher Kevin Plawecki is at right and home plate umpire Ryan Additon is behind the plate.

NEW YORK (AP)—J.A. Happ had two recent conversations with Yankees manager Aaron Boone, who bypassed the 37-year-old left-hander the previous time through New York's rotation.

"Nobody wants to get skipped. I want to be out there and pitch every five days. I feel like I should be," Happ said, explaining matter-of-factly the second talk did not go well. "There was no argument, and nothing bigger than that. It was just I didn't expect it, I guess."

Happ pitched three-hit ball over 5 2/3 innings. Mike Ford drove in three runs and the Yankees beat Boston 4-2 Sunday night for their ninth straight victory over the reeling Red Sox.

"I thought it was probably the best life we've seen at the top of the zone since even going back to spring," Boone said, "really dictating counts and dictating the pace of everything."

Happ (1-1) made his first appearance since Aug. 5, giving up Kevin Pillar's home run down the left-field line in the third. He has a 6.39 ERA over three starts and 12 2/3 innings, and likely has eight starts remaining at most in the shortened season. His contract includes a $17 million option for 2021 that was to be guaranteed for either 27 starts or 165 innings, which becomes 10 starts or 61 1/3 innings.

"That's a subject I think I'm just going to stay away from right now," Happ said. "All in maybe due time on that front."

White Sox 7, Cardinals 2

The Chicago White Sox tied a major league record with four consecutive home runs, all against Roel Ramirez in his major league debut, and went on to beat the St. Louis Cardinals.

Ramirez is the first pitcher to allow four straight homers in his debut. Yoan Moncada, Yasmani Grandal, Jose Abreu and Eloy Jimenez connected during a six-run fifth inning.

It was the 10th time in major league history a team hit four straight homers. The only other time the White Sox did it was on Aug. 14, 2008, against Kansas City, when Jim Thome, Paul Konerko, Alexei Ramirez and Juan Uribe connected.

Indians 8, Tigers 5

Franmil Reyes homered twice, and the Indians beat the Tigers for the 20th straight time, nearing the major league record for most consecutive wins by a team over a single opponent.

Baltimore holds the mark with 23 straight wins over Kansas City in 1969-70. The Indians can match the record when they host Detroit in a three-game series next weekend.

Athletics 15, Giants 3

Stephen Piscotty, Chad Pinder and Marcus Semien homered during Oakland's nine-run fifth inning, powering the A's to their fourth straight win.

Piscotty matched his career high with five RBI as the A's, with the best record in the AL, won for the 13th time in 15 games.

Dodgers 8, Angels 3

Keibert Ruiz homered in his first major league at-bat, Corey Seager hit a three-run homer and the Dodgers swept the Freeway Series.

Max Muncy and Matt Beaty also connected for the NL-leading Dodgers (16-7), who have won a season-best five straight. Scott Alexander (1-0) got the win.

The Dodgers swept a three-game series at Angel Stadium for the first time since interleague play began in 1997, although the Angels still hold a 70-57 overall lead in the rivalry.

Nationals 6, Orioles 5

Max Scherzer struck out 10 over seven innings, and Washington went ahead to stay with an unearned run in the eighth.

With the victory, the defending World Series champion Nationals won the three-game series and climbed out of last place in the NL East at 8-11.

Rays 3, Blue Jays 2
Rays 7, Blue Jays 5

Willy Adames hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning, and Tampa Bay, helped by a huge Toronto error, earned their second win of the day against the Blue Jays.

Earlier, in the finish of a game suspended Saturday night because of rain, Brandon Lowe hit a solo shot off Jordan Romano (1-1) in the ninth to lift the Rays to the victory.

Aaron Loup (3-0) got the win in both games.

Braves 4, Marlins 0

Nick Markakis drove in three runs for Atlanta, and five pitchers combined on a two-hitter.

The Braves took two of three games from the NL East-leading Marlins and trail them by only percentage points. Atlanta is 31-10 against Miami over the past three seasons.

Darren O'Day (2-0) pitched 1 1/3 innings for the win.

Phillies 6, Mets 2

Andrew McCutchen entered as a mid-game replacement and hit a two-run homer to help Philadelphia complete a three-game sweep.

McCutchen was hitting just. 180 this season with no homers and got the day off against Mets starter Rick Porcello (1-3).

Philadelphia's Zack Wheeler (3-0) pitched seven innings in his first appearance against his former team.

Brewers 6, Cubs 5

Keston Hiura and Orlando Arcia homered, and the Brewers earned their third straight win against the NL Central leaders.

Arcia had three hits and scored the go-ahead run on Ryan Braun's seventh-inning single off Jason Adam (0-1). Hiura belted a tying three-run drive in the third for his fifth homer.

Astros 3, Mariners 2

Kyle Tucker hit a game-ending homer in the ninth inning, lifting the Astros to their fourth straight win.

Tucker drove a 96-mph fastball from Erik Swanson (0-2) deep to right for his first career game-ending homer.

Rockies 10, Rangers 6

Colorado's Jon Gray struck out seven over a season-high seven solid innings and was backed by a 14-hit attack.

Gray (1-2) retired 11 of his last 12 batters following Joey Gallo's solo homer in the fourth and ended his day with a strikeout of Derek Dietrich.

Twins 4, Royals 2

Max Kepler hit a two-run homer to support another strong start by Minnesota's Randy Dobnak.

Dobnak (4-1), the surprise right-hander who was promoted four levels last season before making a postseason start, allowed two runs, both on solo homers, in 5 1/3 innings.

Alex Avila doubled, walked twice and scored a pair of runs for Minnesota.

Diamondbacks 5, Padres 4

Eduardo Escobar hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, and the Diamondbacks completed the three-game sweep.

The 31-year-old Escobar had been struggling this season, batting just .167 with one homer after hitting a career-high 35 homers in 2019.

Messi reportedly wants out of Barca

MADRID—Lionel Messi reportedly wants out.

Can you blame him? Barcelona is a mess. Years of shambolic mismanagement came to a head on Friday, in the form of eight Bayern Munich goals. Two days later, Marcelo Bechler, the journalist who first reported Neymar's move to Paris Saint-Germain, says that Messi wants to leave Barca. Not next year, when his contract expires. Now.

And with that, one of the biggest transfer stories in the history of soccer will begin unfolding before our eyes. Messi, the greatest player ever, who's spent his entire professional career at one of the biggest clubs ever, could become available in the weirdest summer ever.

And while every team in the world would love to have him, there isn't one obvious destination.

In other words, an unprecedented player is in an unprecedented situation in an unprecedented world.

The most likely scenario, despite Bechler's reporting, is that Messi begins the 2020-21 season at Barcelona, where he's been for almost two decades. But if he doesn't ... where might he end up?

Here are the top candidates, in order of likelihood, from most realistic landing spot to most outlandish: Manchester City; PSG; Manchester United; Inter Milan; Inter Miami; Newell's Old Boys; Bayern Munich; Juventus; Leeds; and Real Madrid.

You probably think this (Messie going to Real Madrid) is a joke to needle Barca fans.

If not for the obvious reason for Messi to not go to Madrid, the rivalry ... would this not be the perfect landing spot? Richest club in the world looking for its next Galáctico, with a brilliant manager, in the second biggest league in the world, a league Messi knows well, in a country where he's comfortable, a country that speaks his language. Is that not precisely what we assume he's looking for?

And if Messi really is fed up with Barcelona ... would this not be the ultimate revenge?

Bears still undecided on Trubisky, Foles

CHICAG0—As teams were reporting to camp, the Bears continued to say that the quarterback battle between Mitchell Trubisky and Nick Foles was a true competition.

Bears coach Matt Nagy said everything the quarterbacks do in practice is evaluated, down to the checks at the line of scrimmage, but there will be far fewer chances to watch them. Nagy said the coaches are planning on as many competitive drills in practice as possible.

"And we feel confident that we believe it'll all play itself out," Nagy said according to the Chicago Sun-Times. "It'll be completely open and we're just going to take it day by day. And we're excited to see that happen."

Trubisky probably has the edge. He was throwing to his current Bears teammates in unofficial workouts this summer, while Foles is still learning the names of his teammates. And the Bears have more invested in Trubisky, the former No. 2 overall pick and a Pro Bowler in 2018.

"I wouldn't say 'disadvantage' is the right word," Foles said, according to the Sun-Times. "I just say, 'You know what, that's just the situation.'"

Nick Foles, left, and Mitchell Trubisky battle for the starting quarterback position with the Chicago Bears. AP

Where to Clowney?

The Seattle Seahawks have finally moved on from Clowney, a prized free agent who is still unsigned, according to NFL Network's Michael Silver. Clowney played for the Seahawks last season after a trade with the Houston Texans, but Clowney has high salary demands and continues to wait. The Seahawks are looking at Everson Griffen and Clay Matthews instead, Silver said.

It's possible that's a leverage ploy by the Seahawks to leak that they are not interested in Clowney anymore, but let's say they've made up their minds. Clowney's options might be limited, and there are reportedly some question as to whether or not he'll even play this season.

Some teams have the cap space to make Clowney fit, but uncertainty about the 2021 cap might make them wary about a long-term deal. The Tennessee Titans have been the team linked to Clowney most often—and Vic Beasley's unexcused absence creates some more urgency—but the team is clearly fatigued by the waiting game.

It's hard to believe Clowney won't sign at some point, but it's hard to pinpoint a landing spot if it's not Tennessee. Perhaps a surprise suitor will get the impulse to add a top-tier defender right before the season starts.

Any taker for Brown?

There's a lot of amnesia when it comes to Brown. When the eight-game suspension for Brown was announced, the talk started about how he'd fit well with various teams. That seems to ignore that he went AWOL on the Pittsburgh Steelers at the end of the 2018 season, forced the Buffalo Bills to nix a trade, created a lifetime's worth of headaches for the Oakland Raiders and only lasted one game before more bad behavior caused the New England Patriots to cut him. That all happened in about nine months' time.

Yet, people think Brown isn't going to be a problem for his next team?

The Seattle Seahawks are reportedly keeping an eye on Brown, and they have taken some chances in the past. What complicates matters is the suspension could be extended if further violations are found during his civil suit in Florida. Other teams in need of a receiver will be linked to Brown (the Ravens speculation just won't go away), but those teams presumably understand the risk.

Brown's name won't go away, but good luck to anyone signing him.

How is Burrow doing?

In 2011, when a labor dispute wiped out the offseason, Cam Newton set rookie records for a quarterback and rookie starter Andy Dalton helped lead the Cincinnati Bengals to the playoffs.

Perhaps we underestimate elite players' ability to ready themselves to play football. Still, Newton and Dalton at least had some preseason reps.

This year's rookie quarterbacks are flying blind into Week 1. That could affect the chances that Justin Herbert and Tua Tagovailoa start the opener for the Los Angeles Chargers and Miami Dolphins, respectively. No matter what, the Cincinnati Bengals are set on first overall pick Joe Burrow starting. Burrow doesn't think it'll be a problem. He told reporters he was unaware there was going to be no preseason ("I'm on a need-to-know basis right now," he said), and has been doing what he can to be as prepared as possible. The Bengals understand the challenges but seem to believe it won't take long for Burrow to get up to speed.

"He's really sharp. He has excellent retention of information. His process is very fast," Bengals quarterbacks coach Dan Pitcher said.

How are the new look Pats?

Honestly, this August isn't much different in terms of Patriots news. Even in a normal preseason, we don't hear a lot from Bill Belichick about how he's feeling about certain players or who will start.

The Patriots have undergone more change than anyone this offseason. Tom Brady is gone, replaced by Cam Newton. They couldn't be more different as players. Many defensive standouts left in the offseason, and that was before the Patriots had eight players opt out.

FLASHBACK

From Page 20

ier fought back in the second with a tough 7-6 victory. Then in the decider, Schorr recovered after posting a convincing 10-5 win.

With his title victory in the boys U14 division, Schorr gave the CNMI its second singles championship in the 2017 edition of the POJC. The other singles crown was courtesy of Carol Lee, who bagged her second straight U16 title after waltzing past Fiji's Vienna Kumar in the finals, 6-1, 6-2.

Besides the two singles championships, the Jeff Racecoached CNMI Junior National Team got two more titles, making the islands the squad with the most crowns.

Lee also won the girls U16 doubles division after partnering with Malika Miyawaki, while Schorr and Song took the boys U14 doubles title.

The Commonwealth edged the favored Tahiti and the 12 other island-nations in the race for the most championships in the POJC. Tahiti had three titles with its team topping the boys U12 and U16 doubles, and girls U14 doubles.

Lee, Miyawaki, Schorr, and Song are done with junior tennis and are now in college.

'THE CRANK'

From Page 20

people around him from the virus, Camacho said he diligently follows safety protocols and encouraged others to do the same.

"I have been limiting my contact with people and just with those who I train with and closely family and friends. I am mainly at home training," he said.

"I urge people to continue following safety measures like washing their hands, wearing mask, and staying home as much as possible," Camacho added.

As for his preparation against Weaver, Camacho said he will stay in California with Team Oyama for the training camp for at least three weeks before heading to Las Vegas.

"I will focus on the task at hand and stop worrying about things I cannot control—COVID, protests, opponent changes, quarantine, and etc. I will just focus on what I can control—training, mindset, and my focus on Sept. 12," said the Team Oyama standout.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Frank "The Crank" Camacho takes a selfie while waiting for his connecting flight to California to take off last Monday.

Before battling Weaver, Camacho was scheduled to square off against Matt Frevola in UFC on ESPN 11 last June 20. However, Frevola was pulled out from the fight card, as one of his cornerman was tested positive for COVID-19 before the weigh-in. UFC newcomer Justin Jaynes took Frevola's spot and caught Camacho off guard, winning via TKO (punches) in the first round. The loss came after Camacho's defeat (submission) at the hands of Beneil Dariush.

Despite his back-to-back setbacks and the current health and economic situations we are in because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Camacho vows to keep on fighting just like the rest of us.

"We all will."

Lakers face stiff test against Lillard, Blazers

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'The Crank' faces two battles

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

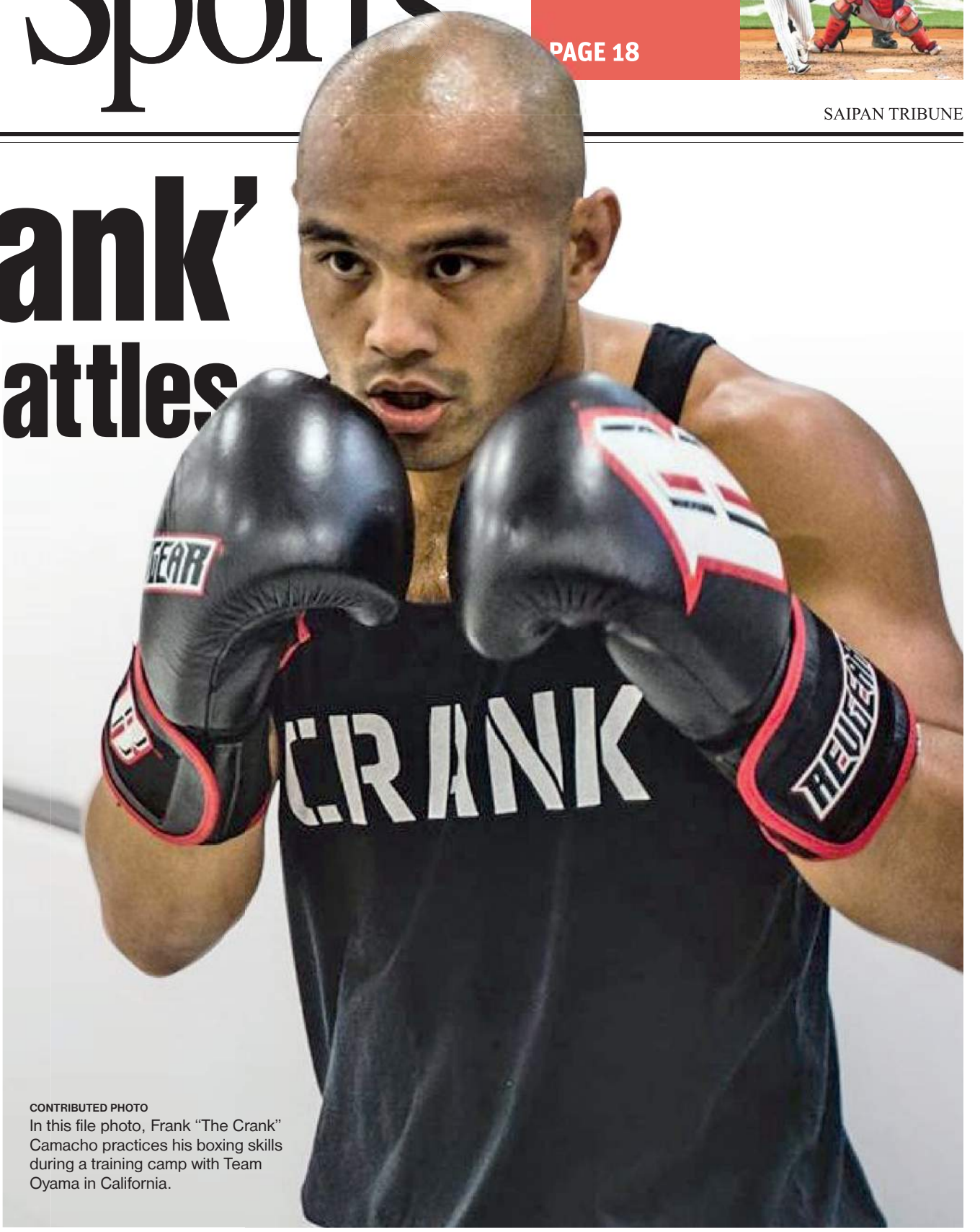
At this time of the pandemic, Frank "The Crank" Camacho has battles on and off the MMA cage.

He left Guam for California two days ago for a training camp in preparation for his Sept. 12 bout against Brok "Chata Tuska" Weaver in next month's UFC Fight Night in Las Vegas, Nevada. Camacho recognized the risk that comes with his travel at a time when COVID-19 cases in the mainland continue to rise, especially in the Golden State. The Marianas pride also acknowledged what's at stake in his duel against Weaver.

"It's the last fight in my contract. I need this W," said Camacho, who got his second deal with the Ultimate Fighting Championship late last year.

The 31-year-old athlete will climb to the cage anew aiming to bounce back from two straight losses, take his third UFC victory in eight fights, and get another contract with the biggest MMA promotion company in the world.

The warrior in Camacho is evident, as he decided to accept the early fight offer despite the odds stacked against him.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
In this file photo, Frank "The Crank" Camacho practices his boxing skills during a training camp with Team Oyama in California.

"Truthfully, I'm not as scared of getting COVID-19 as I was before. I'm more worried about the other problems that come with it—not being able to do my job, spreading it to those who won't be able to battle it off with their underlying conditions; and the other effects it will have by spreading it," the Guam-born and Saipan-raised fighter said.

To protect himself and the

See 'THE CRANK' on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho ducks and hits Damien Brown during their bout in UFC Fight Night 121 in Sydney, Australia in 2017.

Flashback: All-CNMI semis affair in Fiji

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four years ago, on this day, CNMI players Robbie Schorr and Ken Song arranged a family affair after prevailing in their respective playoff matches in the boys U14 singles division in the 2016 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

Schorr first advanced to the semifinals after sweeping Vanuatu's Warea Tigona, 6-1, 6-2, in the upper bracket quarterfinals. Song followed suit after eliminating fellow CNMI player Sean Lee 6-2, 7-6 (7), at the bottom half of the bracket.

Schorr then went on to clinch a finals ticket in the division following a 6-1, 6-1 triumph over Song in the semifinals. Next up for Schorr was Tahiti's Vaitei Molinier and the Commonwealth bet needed a super-tiebreaker third set to notch the singles crown. Schorr took the opening set of the finals, 6-2, but missed another sweep when Molin-

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE
In this file photo, the then 14-year-old Ken Song serves, while Robbie Schorr gets ready near the net during the 2016 CNMI Junior Tennis Championships held at the AMP tennis courts.